

A MOST
 Excellent and com-
 fortable Treatise, for all such as
 are any manner of way either trou-
 bled in minde or afflicted in bodie,
 Made by *Andrew Kingesmyl* Gen-
 tleman, sometime fellowe of
 Alsolne Colledge
 in Oxforde.

Whereunto is adioyned a verie
 godly and learned Exhortation to
 suffer patiently al afflictions for the
Gospel of Christ Iesus.

And also a conference betwixt a
 godly learned Christian & an afflicted
 conscience: wherein, by the holy Scrip-
 tures the sleights of Satan are
 made manifest, and over-
 throwen: with a godly
 prayer thereunto
 annexed.

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ANNO 1577.



TO THE CHRISTIAN

READER.

HA VING diuers papers and writings committed vnto me by a deare friend of myne, whom it pleased God not long since, after manie yeeres trauaile very profitably bestowed in the ministerie and preaching of the Gospell, to call out of this miserable, wretched and wicked world: And finding amongst the said writings this Treatise and the Exhortation annexed thereunto: I read both the one and the other all ouer, to mine owne great profite and comfort, I must needes confesse. And therefore perswaded by mine owne experience in the reading of both these treatises, that the publishing of them in print might be no lesse profitable and comfortable to many others, then to my selfe I founde them: I thought good not to holde them longer in my priuate custodie as things dead and buried with the Authours, but to commit them to the Printer, so to haue them communicated to this Church of England, and as manie as vnderstand the Englishe, to the prayse and glorie of God for his gracious giftes in the writers, and for the comfort and instruction (I doubt not) of so many as shall reade them.

Of the Authour of the Exhortation, I can say nothing more then that (as I coniecture by that he writeth) he liued in the late raigne of Q. Marie, being then an exile in foraine partes for the Gospell, which at that time also was banished from hence, as touching the open profession thereof in

A. ij.

any

TO THE CHRIST. READ.

any common and publike places. And as for the matter of his Exhortation, I shall not neede to say anie more in commendation thereof to stirre men vp to the reading of it, then the bare title giuen to the same importeth: which with the shortnesse of the Treatise it selfe may suffice to allure any godly and well disposed person to peruse the same.

As touching the Authour of the Treatise whose name I haue expressed, though I could of him saye verie much to his great commendation, and that of mine owne knowledge, for that liuing together in one house we were long time and familiarly acquainted: Yet I will for some respectes forbear to prayse him for his whole life and death, referring thee to that which is briefly said of him (and printed before) in a litle booke of his entituled, The view of mans estate, &c: of which booke, though by an other name, him selfe maketh mention in this treatise: and had I knowen so much before the impression thereof, as I coulde not, this comming so lately and long after to my handes, it shoulde haue borne no other name, then now I well perceyue the Authour him selfe called it by: though the title it now hath, be not (I trust) improper and impertinent to the matter he handleth therein. To whom he writte this Treatise of comfort, and vpon what occasion, thou mayest easely perceyue if thou reade the whole all ouer: And though shee, to whome he writte the same be yet liuing, and the occasion thereof such as peraduenture some will mislike of the publishing thereof: Yet being certainly perswaded that neither the writer, if he were now liuing, or she, to whom he writte, woulde haue any thing concealed for priuate re-

TO THE CHRIST. READ.

uate respectes, that may serue so well as this Treatise will (I am assured) to the edifying and comfort of manie: I haue aduentured to be a meane that it might be imprinted, with the approbation of such as by good order in this behalfe are appointed to allowe of all such matters to be published.

Wherefore, gentle Reader, accept in good part both this Treatise, and the Exhortation adioyned thereunto: which if they may serue for thy instruction and comfort, as no doubt they will, thou hast great cause to prayse God both for the writers, and things by them written.

* *

f. mylles.


A iii.

A most Comfortable

Treatise written by Andrew Kingesmill
to his sister, very profitable for all men,
especially for such as are any ma-
ner of way afflicted in body
or minde, &c.

God forbid that I should reioyce in any
thing, but in the Crosse of our Lorde Iesus
Christ, whereby the world is crucified vnto me,
and I vnto the worlde. Gal. 6.14.

The cause
that moou-
ed the
Authour
to wryte
this Trea-
tise.

 Eare sister in our Lord and
Saviour Christe Iesus,
wheras I vnderstand of your
present state and condition,
that it hath pleased God our
heauely Father, somewhat
to visite & touch you with his heauie hand, to
chastize you with the rodde of his correction,
and to lay vpon you some part of the crosse of
his Christ: Had I a farre better talent then
I haue, which (God knowes) is but simple,
yet I thought I could not any otherwise bet-
ter bestowe & occupie the same, then so, as it
were, to lay it with you in exchange & bāke,
as by y^e grace of God to vtter vnto you some
saying or sentence, whereout you might re-
ceiue some piece of relief or comfort: for this
vsurie, and those that haue any, so to occupie
their talents, as to visite the afflicted, to com-
fort the

Comforts in afflictions.

fort the comfortlesse, and to bestow although
as it were but one poore penie, to strengthen
the pensue in patience, euen as our Sauour
commended the deuoute womans worke, **Mat. 26. 10**
for bestowing her oyle vpon him toward his
burial: So I doute not but this taske which
it hath pleased God now to set me, shall ap-
peare vnto him a lawfull and gainefull vsurie,
a wel bestowed oymntment, and such a worke,
that as it lacketh not his charge, so it shal not
be either to you fruitlesse, either with him
altogether thankelesse. Reioyce with them
that reioyce (sayth the Apostle) and weepe **Rō. 12. 15.**
with them that weepe. And the sonne of Si-
rach likewise, Let not them that weepe be **Eccle. 7. 34**
without comfort, but mourne with such as
mourne. Now (Sister) considering such &
the like sayings, calling to minde howe we
haue reioyced together, enioying the good
dayes, that God of his goodnesse hath here-
tofore giuen vs, and nothing doubting, but
he will driue away those stormie cloudes, and
cause againe his cherefull sunne to rise and
shine vpon vs: and (that which I can not for-
get) what a mourner you were to me in the
time of my mourning: veriey now in the time
of your distresse if my heauinesse would ease
you, or my sorrow might turne to your ioye,

A iiii.

I thinke

Comforts in afflictions.

2.Sam.I.

12.

I thinke my heart be not so harde, but that I should bestowe some teares vpon you, although that I foresee mine owne portion in the worlde to be none other but paines without pleasure. David we reade lamented Sauls death, although one that sought his bloud. And likewise Absolon that wicked childe & vnnatural sonne, with what a fatherly affection did he pitie his case: crying whē he heard the certaintie of his death, in such sort as is expressed in y^e 2. of Sam. 18. My sonne Absolon, my sonne, my sonne Absolon, would God I had died for thee: So verely ought our cases and calamities to be common, and I especially haue iuste occasion to beare the burthen with you, being vnto me a true Sister, a Sister by naturall natiuitie, a Sister by heauenly regeneration, one with whome I haue enioyed the sweete, and who with me hath not refused the sowre: wherefore as I cannot but with brotherly affection be sorie for your sadnes, so when I somewhat lift vp mine eyes toward heauen, & haue in consideration the infinite mercies and marueilous working of God our heauenly Father, concerning his chosen children and sanctified Sainctes here on earth, then (me thinkes) I receiue so plentifull ioye of spirit, and prouision of

Comforts in afflictions.

sion of patience against those stormes and tempestes of aduersities and afflictions, which I know I haue in the way of my pilgrimage to passe, and which I know by the course of Gods working abyde certainly for all true & stedfast Christians, that in uttering the same vnto you it may be I shall giue you some occasion of comfort. God therefore I beseeche him guide my hand, and direct my heart, and so beholde you with his Fatherly eye, and cherefull countenance, that we may both receiue comfort of his holy Spirit the true comforter, promised by our Saviour, that we may reioyce one with another, and both in the Lord.

Now there are diuers meanes that God hath ordeined & prouided for the cherishing and refreshing of heauie heartes and sorrowful soules: for some there are which are proper to the bodie, as earthly and temporall, other concerne the minde, as Ghostly and continual, which wheras they are to be had, neither of them are to be refused, forasmuch as God therein with our vse and commoditie, looketh to reape the fruite of his owne glorie. S. Paul alloweth Timothie and counsel-
 leth him for his weake stomaks sake moderately to drinke wyne: and Salomon lyke-
 wise,

Comforts,
 some are
 temporall,
 some eter-
 nall.

Temporal
 comforts.

1. Tim. 5.
 23.

Comforts in afflictions.

Prou. 31.6 Give the strong drinke vnto him that is readie to perishe, and wine vnto them that haue grieve of hearte. Concerning these, although they be somewhat besides my care, yet this I may truly saye, that you haue to thanke God with a most chereful spirit, y^e he hath not left you so destitute in this behalf, as he hath thousands of other our brethren.

**Meate &
drink, & c.**

Howe many are there, not far from you, if you list (as I thinke you doe) to beholde them, and consider them with some comparison, in respect of whom you must nedes confesse your selfe an happie handmaid of God: as whose hope is their comfort, patience their pleasure, their wine a cuppe of colde water, and whom for their apparel, necessitie alloweth no more then their bare naked skin: how many poore Lazars are there that would be glad to gather vp the crummes vnder that table, where your hand is free without grudging: You say peraduenture sometimes in your fit, I am a miserable woman: But what may they saye, that haue neither cloth nor clout to defend them from the bitter byting colde: what may they say, which many times haue neither bitte of bread, neither droppe of drinke, wherewith to satisfie y^e griedie worne of hunger, or to quenche the drie disease of thirst:

Comforts in afflictions.

thirst: How many are there, which in comparison of you, and me although peradventure the leaste of xiiii, who being driuen to the drasse of hogges, may say with the prodigal sonne, In how farre better case are the hired seruantes of that house, then we seely soules are: doubtlesse hauing as we haue, although we did get it hardly, & buye it dearely, yet should we be in farre better state then a great number, which by experience knowe what the want of those necessaries are, which God of his gracious goodnes hath with a liberall hand, bestowed on vs his euill deseruing seruantes: and who for any thing to be sene in our selues, deserue as euill and worse then many of those neddy naked soules, which at sundrie times faint for want of foode, & as the bare beastes stand open to all winde and weather, subiect to all aduentures, free from no aduersitie. Dauid well considered these benefites of God, which we, because that we haue not felt the lacke of them, make litle account of. God satisfieth saith he, the thirstie soule, and filleth the hungry soule with good things: and numbring diuers other the like benefites, which Gods people dayly receiue at his hande, hee crieth out twise or thryse with earnest zeale, O that men woulde acknowledge

Psal. 107. 9

Comforts in afflictions.

knowledge before the Lord his louing kindnes, and his wonderous workes before the sonnes of men: Let vs likewise acknowledge the goodnes of God toward vs in this behalfe.

Kinsfolkes & friends. And me thinkes (Sister) if these outward earthly thinges may anie thing make in the matter, you haue iust cause to reioyce. Dauid you know complaineth often times that his familiars and kindred started from him in his aduersitie, for beside the multitude of his enemies, which as he maketh his accout were more then heares vpon his head, he saith
Psal. 69. 8. also, I am become a stranger vnto my brethren, euen an aliant vnto my mothers sons: In another place, he vttereth as a part of his griefe, that he was bereft of his Father and Mother: Concerning those pointes you are not so farre in as Dauid was: you haue brethren, you haue sisters, I know, that account your case their common case. That God hath visited our Father, I craue as great part of that plague as the best or the worst of you: that God hath so preserved our Mother, the mirrour of al mothers, therein you haue as great part as the best of vs. As for open enemies that seeke your hinderance, or that reioyce at your aduersitie, I know none
you

Comforts in afflictions.

you haue : but you know your self a number of your friends, that vnfaignedly wishe your prosperitie.

Our Sauour, you may remember, complained that the Foxes had holes where to couch them, and the birdes of the aire haue their place of rest, but the Sonne of man had not where to hide his head. ¶ That we could, that we would compare our selues in our aduersities with our Sauour, the Sonne of man, the verie Sonne of God, of him to learne patience : then no doubt but by him we should receiue comfort. Consider therfore the goodnes of God, how he hath prouided for vs by the gentlenes of our deare Mother, a place which we vse as an home and habitation, and that no Foxe hole, but thanks be to God a warme and wel feathered neste, where we haue free egressse and regresse.

This scripture was fulfilled in our Sauour, They of a mā's owne house are his enemies, and he thereof complaining saide, He that eateth bread with mee hath lift vp his heele against me : but thanks be vnto our heauenly Father, who hath ioyned our house in such an vnitie, that we do not (as farre as I see) one disbeine the other in necessities and aduersities, neither enuie ech other in things succeeding

A house
or dwell-
ling place.

Concord
of brethre

Comforts in afflictions.

succeeding prosperously. God of his mercie
gratit that band long to continue in y^e house
of Sidmountaine, that it may deserue the
commendation of Ierusalem, euen to be as
Psal. 122.3 a Citie which is at peace within it self. This
was it whereof Dauid receiued much com-
fort, that after great diuisions, God had grati-
fied in his kingdome the peace and concorde
of his people, so he saith of his experiēce, Be-
Psal. 133.1 hold how good a thing it is, and how come-
ly, for brethren to dwell euen together. He
compareth it vnto the precious oymnt
powred on the head, that spreadeth abroad to
the refreshing of the whole bodie, and vnto
the dewe of Hermon, and that which falleth
vpon the mountaines of Sion, places ryche
and fruitfull both with temporal benefites, &
with the spirituall blessings of God. This
cherefull oyle and freshe dewe of vnitie and
concord betwixt you, your brethren, sisters
and friendes, God hath blessed you withall:
suche dewe falleth not in all places, such oyle
is not to be found in al houses, the fresh flow-
er of vnitie and amitie is not to be found in
euerie fielde: but this as it groweth greene
in the Garden of Sidmountaine, which if it
fade, then farewell my part: but now flouri-
shing as it doth by the gracious goodnesse
of God,

Comforts in afflictions.

of God, me thinke you should not but reioyce in the Lord, who hath reserved vnto you this piece of Paradise, that you may haue the full fruition of that beautiful and sweet smelling flowre of concord. Thus I haue endeouored somewhat to lead you into the consideration of the temporall benefites and blessings of God bestowed vpon you, whereout it may be you shal pick some piece of comfort, if things worldly and earthly, outward and temporall, may make any thing in this medicine. But it may be, that as to the sicke, things otherwise sweete become sowre & vnsauerie, and to the weake and sickely stomake, the sweet hony is lothsome: so the mothe of pensiuenes hath entered your heart, that these weaker medicines may not haue their full force, and due operation.

Nowe after that you haue stode on this place, to see and looke about you what comfort is to be had on earth, where you may well espie more then I haue shewed you: hencefoorth (Sister) let vs get on the mounting wynges of fayth, let vs rayse our selues vp through the clouds, euē to the heauens, let vs come from the footstoole of God to his glorious seate, and that cannot be but comfortable vnto vs to consider. For S. Iohn Reue. 4. 4.
(as he

Everlastig
and hea-
uenly com-
forts.

Comforts in afflictions.

(as he describeth his vision) when he saw the Maiestie of God sitting on his glorious throne, declareth that the throne of God is compassed about with a rainbow, a sure seale and token of Gods mercie towards vs, that although he often times raine vpon vs, yet he wil no more drowne vs. This hath euer bene the chief comfort of the godly in al their distresses and afflictions, they all had an especial eye this way: Reade you y^e 121. Psal. the 123. Psalme, there to consider the practise of the Prophet, how he looked toward y^e throne of God. I will lift mine eyes to the Mountaines (saith he) from whence mine helpe shall come, mine helpe commeth from the Lord which hath made heauen and earth, &c. I lift mine eyes to thee that dwellest in the heauens: beholde, as the eyes of an handmayde marke the eyes of her mistres, so our eyes wayte vpon the Lord our God, vntill he haue mercie vpon vs. Now then (Sister) laying aside all earthly considerations, if they will not worke with you, let vs looke vpon that helpe that commeth from heauen.

This as I remember is one amongst the wise sayings of Salomon: Heauines casteth downe the hearte of man, but a good worde rayseth it vp againe: If any mans worde
or wis-

Comforts in afflictions.

or wisdom may any thing herein preuaile,
then especially the good word of God, which ^{Gods}
as David sayth is mighty in operation. It is ^{worde.}
so full of comfort, that if grace wanted not to
utter and receiue it accordingly, I nothing
doubte but if you were halfe dead, it would
soone quicken and set you vpright againe.
So sayth S. Paul, whatsoeuer is written, is ^{Rom. 15.4.}
written for our learning, that we through
comfort and patience of the Scriptures,
might haue hope. Seing then the Lord hath
left vs this heavenly treasure here on earth,
euen to our so great commoditie thereby to
learne patience, and receiue comfort, let vs
use these as our spectacles to behold the mer-
cies of God, which of our selues being no-
thing but blindenesse it selfe, are not able to
searche out or to see: and this shalbe as your
diet, that you resort to those sweete running
ryuers, springing vp vnto eternall life, coun-
selling and aduising you, here to laye out the
whole line of your life: no day, nor houre co-
meth amisse, but in the Scriptures you may
find comfort: Yea, there ye shall meete with
the fountaine of all comfort, the Spirit of
God chering and cherishing you after a hea-
uenly and marueylous maner. Presently for
my part, I chiefly commit your cause to his

B.

cure,

Comforts in afflictions.

cure, and by his grace, I shall endeavour to giue you some taste of that precious liquour: God graunt it be not marred for lacke of a better vessel.

Election in Christ. First therfore, I am perswaded y^e you nothing dout of your adoption and election in Christ Iesus, that your name is entred in the booke of life, and that you are surely sealed by for a saued sanctified soule. This foundation being layd on so sure a ground, hauing our hands fastened on this hold, what storms or floods of affliction may there arise, but we may (considering y^e tender mercy of God towarde his chosen children) endure with patience, ouercome with comfort, and wade thorow with ioy, knowing sure we shal haue a day, and seeing certainly although a farre of, the quiet and glorious haue we haue to arrine at: It is a most comfortable saying **Rom. 8.28.** which the Apostle vttereth vnto you: We knowe (saith he) that all things worke together for the beste vnto them that loue God, euen to them that are called of his purpose. This one sentence so setting forth the care that God your heauenly Father hath ouer you, might satisfie you, if you could weigh it as it is worthe.

Great and manifold were the miseries
which

Comforts in afflictions.

which that chosen of God suffered, reade you the 11. of the 2. to the Corinthians. You shal Paul finde there at what hard meat, & how sowe sauce the Lord set that his paineful and faithfull seruant: as stripes, perilles both on Sea and land, euill entreatie both of the Iewe and the Gentile, the deceit of false brethren, wearinesse, painfulnesse, watching, hunger, thirst, colde, nakednesse, and all kinde of persecutiō. Yet he hauing that confidence and stedfast perswasion of the eternal prouidence of God, that he turneth all things to the commoditie of his electe, euen in the middest of these miseries he shewed a most chereful spirit, as hee saith numbring many kindes of persecutions, in all these things we are more then conquerours, by him that loued vs. Rom. 8.37.

In what distresse thinke you was that iust Ioseph, being endangered to perish in the pit, Ioseph. throwne in by the handes of his owne brethren, and afterwarde solde of them into a strange countrey, where also being taken of suspicion to haue abused his Master Potiphar's wyfe, was cast into prison: yet he also ouer these and the like temptations, became in time a conquerour, well perceiuing in the ende, that it was the Lordes doing to some good ende, although he did not straight vnderstand

By it.

derstand

Comforts in afflictions.

Gen. 45.
4.5.

Gen. 45. 8.

derstand the same. And therefore besides his owne comfort, he quieted also the troubled mindes of his brethren, declaring vnto them the prouidence of God, wheron he wholly depended. I am Ioseph your brother (sayth he) whom ye solde into Egypt: now therefore be not sadde, nor grieued with your selues that you solde me hither, for God did send me hither for your preservation: neyther did hee so much attend the fact of his brethren, as the prouidence of God in the matter, so that he seemeth in respect flatly to denie that they had done ought in the matter: as in these wordes, Now then you sent me not hither, but God who hath made me a Father vnto Pharao, and Lord ouer all his house, and ruler throughout all the land of Egypt. And by this meanes and considerations, God gaue him that he made the lesse accompt of the absence of his parentes, the ingratitude of his brethren, the lack of his countrey, and also the slanderous and vniust imprisonment.

Likewise Dauid beeing in flight for the feare of his owne sonne Absolon, heard, and bare with patience, rayling Shimei, taking as it were his pleasure of him in his aduersitie, throwing stones at him as though hee accounted no more of him then of a vyle dog,
cursing

Comforts in afflictions.

cursing and calling him murderer: & where-
as Abishai his courage serued him to reuēge
Davids quarrel, and would haue set his head,
if that he would haue but said the worde: Be-^{David.}
holde the humilitie, the patience of a Pro-
phet, the comfort of a King, verely he lifted
vp his eyes to the hill, the holy hill of God,
from whence he was assured all those things
proceeded, to some commoditie and furthe-
rance of his: wherfore this was his answer
to Abishai that sought reuengement, he cur-
seth me, euen because the Lorde hath bidden
him curse David. This was the holde and
handfast, that that princely Prophete tooke
wherewith to stave him self, euer depending
vpon the prouidence of his liuing God. We
knewe that whatsoeuer befell him, God had
a stroke in it, yea and further, being fully per-
swaded of the mercie of God, he knewe most
assuredly those chastisements and correcti-
ons should turne him to God, as he maketh
protestation, in the 119. Psal. It is good for
me that I haue bene afflicted: so that beside
his patience and comfort he accompted it a
gaine, and none of the smallest benefites of
God, that he was so corrected at his iust and
mercifull hand.

You may also consider the example of pati-

B. iii.

ent Iob:

Comforts in afflictions.

ent Iob : How he waded through his temptations, as who knowing that all those hills of miserie, fell vpon him, no otherwise then by the determinate appointment of the most hiest, with the consideration thereof he refreshed himselfe, after that all worldly succours and comforts were taken from him, and so became a conquerour ouer all the grievous assaultes of Satan, as who, he was assured, could go no further then he had his limittes appointed and assigned vnto him, by the iust ruling and mercifull disposing hand of the euerliuing God: wherfore he made it no matter of misfortune (as we commonly do in the like cases) that his cattel were made a praye for his enemies, that his sonnes & daughters had that strange ende, the house falling on their heads : but by such his words he openly sheweth the inward comfort of his hearte, The Lord hath giue (saith he) & Lord hath taken away, as it pleased the Lord so is it come to passe, blessed be & Name of the Lord : & by this we vnderstand that he had not so much regard of his enemies the Caldeans and the Sabeans, whome he knewe to be but the instruments of the Deuill the chiefe workeman, but alwayes had his eye stedfastly bent vpon God his Creator and redeemer, without

Comforts in afflictions.

out whose ordinance and appointment, neither of them could haue any whit mooued or preuailed against him, no more then the senselesse winde had power of it selfe, so to overthrowe the house vpon his children. And for as much as he was the seruant of God, he assured himselfe, that Satan with his slaues could not doe or intend him so much hurt, but his Lorde and God would euen by the same meanes turne it to his great furtherance & commoditie, as we are giuen to vnderstand in y^e end of the historie that God did in deede perfourme y^e same: So that by this he became so humble and patient, so stedfast in hope, that he said, that if the Lords pleasure were to kill him, to take his life from him, yet would he not let go his holde, giue ouer his hope, or blaspheme the Name of God, to the which he was marueilously prouoked.

Behold likewise the behauiour & courage of those three noble yong men whom Nabuchodonozor threatened the terrible fire, for that they refused to worship his golden god: see how they take holde on the mercie, and prouident care of God their Lord. For thus they answered the King, Beholde, our God whom we serue is able to deliuer vs from the hote fire forname, & he wil deliuer vs out of

Three children
in the
fornace.

Comforts in afflictions,

thine hand (O King.) But if not, be it known to thee (O King) that we wil not serue thy gods, nor do worshippe to thy golden Image, which thou hast set vp: and according to that their cōstant hope and faith, the Lord fayleth not, as you know, marueilously to deliuer them.

And what other comfort had their fellow
Daniel. Daniel being enclosed to be deuoured of the
Dan. 6.16. Lyons in the Denne: according to whose
&c. hope, likewise the Lord sent his Angel to
shut and mouzle vp the Lyons mouthes, sa-
uing him harmlesse. The Scripture yeldeth
plentifull store of the like examples and say-
ings, whereout if we stand to consider them,
we haue inough so to arme vs against all ad-
uentures, that no tribulation, no anguish may
bee so extreme, but that by patience we may
ouercome them, no calamities so great or
griuous, but that they are to be conquered
by comfort of the Scriptures. So sayth the
1. Cor. 10. Apostle, God is faithfull which wil not suffer
13. you to bee tempted aboue your power, but
will euen giue the issue with the temptati-
ons, that you may bee able to beare them:
where he so cōforteth the afflicted among the
Corinthians, and doth strengthen them vn-
der the crosse, leading them no farther then
into

Comforts in afflictions.

into the consideration of Gods eternall prouidence, which maketh the sharpe and the sorowe, soft and sweete in the ende, although no maner of chastisement (as he saith) is ioy-^{Heb. 12. 12}ous for the present time. I haue in those former examples according to my simplicitie, sent you some of the righteous and tried seruants of God, to stand you in steade of Apothecaries and Surgeons, of whom you may learne to cure your wound without douting, forasmuch as they minister you euen such soueraigne medicines, as they them selues haue tasted and tried (as you see) to their endlesse comfort: but yet the chief phisition is to come, Christ Iesus (I meane) the salue of all^{Christ.} our sores, the paterne of al patience, and most assured comfort of all sorowning soules, and readie redresse in all aduersities. You haue seene in the examples afoze, the experiēce of good souldiours fighting a good fight, and how they haue quitte themselves against the temptations of the worlde, and the assaults of Satan: Nowe turne your eyes toward Christ our redemer the great Captaine, and most renowned conquerour of all that euer tasted these worldly infirmities, whose euill entreatie and hard handling the time serueth not now to describe vnto you, but I send you
to the

Comforts in afflictions.

*This is since
imprinted
and called,
The viewe
of the estate
of man, &c.
Philip 2.5.
6.7.8.*

to the head spring, the historie of the Gospel: you may also at your leasure reade that mine exercise concerning the loue of God, where I haue assayed to say somewhat to this purpose. Onely now I giue you S. Pauls exhortation, Let the same minde be in you which was euen in Christe Iesus, who being the Sonne of God, and very God, one with his Father, made himself of no reputation, tooke on him the forme of a seruāt, he humbled himselfe and became obedient vnto the death, eue to the death of the crosse. Here learne of your Sauour, patience and humilitie, and marke where lay his comfort, verely that way that other his saued soules haue sought, euen the prouidence of his God, and by him our God his Father, & (thākes be to him) our Father: for so he said when that lost childe went out from him and his other disciples to worke his purposed treason, Verely (saith he) it goeth with the sonne of man, as it is written of him: and at this marke he seemed to ayne, when as Pilate vaunted himselfe and triumphed ouer him, saying, that he had power to crucifie him, and likewise to loose him: then our Sauours answer was, thou couldest haue no power against me, except it were giuen thee from aboue. So when he did with deepe

Comforts in afflictions.

deepe cōsideration as it were aforehand, taste the bitternesse of his cuppe, this way he found out of his temptatiō, saying to his father, thy will be fulfilled and not myne : this was his comfort in the extremities of the crosse, and his flesh also rested in this hope, that the Lord Act. 2. 26, 27. would not suffer his holy one to see corruption. By these you may be sufficiently stored with diuerse kinde of medicines, you haue both the gentle and the strong working before you.

The next care concerneth the vse hereof, The applying of the former examples. that they be applied and placed to the sore. Now therefore if you wil set these glasses of the afflicted seruants of God, and especially Christ crucified before your eyes, I doubt not but that it shall quicken all the dead flesh that lieth about your heart. For first if you wil compare quantitie with quantitie, surely yours may seeme but an April showre in cōparison of these bloudie floudes and seas of sorowes that passed ouer their heads. But make your case comparable with others the aforesaid (as peraduenture it is more then I am aware of) yet being grounde on Christ Iesus with stedfast faith, hauing your election certaine by your honest conuersation in the woꝝks of light, and the Spirit of adopti-
on bea-

Comforts in afflictions.

on bearing witnes with your spirit that you are a chosen childe of God, hauing in iust consideration the iust dealing and mercifull prouidence of God towarde his vessels prepared to honour, although in your selfe you be humbled (as necessarie it is) yet in God you cannot but reioyce and glorie with his seruants and Saintes on the earth. Were it so that men reuiled you as Shimei did Dauid, why should you not content & quiet your self as Dauid did, saying, the Lord hath sent him for this purpose: yea, whatsoeuer kinde of crosse it shall please God to visite vs withall, we ought by his example to consider the good purpose of God therein, & to say, It is good for vs that we taste of some troyble, lest we
Heb. 12.3. be found for bastard children (as the Apostle speaketh.) If you had sustained losse of friends, parents, childre or husbands, standing at one staye with Iob, then for your comfort you haue to say, The Lord hath giuen, the Lord hath taken away. Let the case be (I am sure it is not so ill) that you were pestered with Iobs miserable disease, as wee are all in the hands of God, vpon vs to worke his wil, and there is neither of both vndoubtedly, but haue deserued far worse then iust Iob: yet he hath prouided for vs before hand a staffe to staye
on, and

Comforts in afflictions.

on, and hath giuen vs a lesson of patience in that answere which he made his wyfe, prouoking him to yelde to the assault of Satan, and to blaspheme his God: Thou speakest like a foolish woman (saith he) shall wee receiue good at the hand of God, & not receiue euill? If you had lost your countrey, which now you enioye by the benefit of God, might you not well conceiue with your selfe of the will and worke of God therein, to some such purpose as he wrought by Iosephs sale and bannishment: wheresoeuer you shall come, whatsoeuer entertainment or entreatie you should finde, would you not say as he did, it is God that hath sent me hither? Suppose you were in the pit with Ioseph, in the dene with Daniel, or that you made by the melle with those thre appointed to the fyer, Sidrach, Misach, and Abednego: would you mistrust now especially that they haue made the way before you, but that God would prouide some issue for you in the midst of these temptations, either to saue you harmlesse by a mightie deliuerance, or els as it should be best for you to make you a conquerour by patience?

And to come to Christ that fountaine of Christ to
all consolation for all Christians: O Sister, ^{ments and}
we neuer felt with our litle finger that fyer ^{afflictions}
wherein

Comforts in afflictions.

wherein he was consumed for our finnes, we haue not tasted with the typp of our tongue, that bitter cuppe, wherein he swallowed vp death due vnto vs for our offences: wee sleepe in whole skennes, his hands, his feete, his sydes were pearced of merckles murderers: we for the most part haue ease and rest, he found no place on earth where to rest his head: we thinke much if we be somewhat diseased with a litle paine or grieve of bodie, he sweet and shed bloudie water to ease vs, and release vs of perpetuall paines. Nowe then (Sister) thrust in your finger with Thomas the Apostle, and feele with faith the bloudie woundes of your sauour and redeemer: and these being considered, what are our greatest griefes, but fleabites in comparison, besides that inward anguisher and passion of the soule, farre passing his outwarde apparent pangues, whereby he felt the seuerer iudgement and wrath of God, the rewarde of our euil deserts: Come you hither (Sister) with your heauie burthen and here refresh you, for here is the well and the water of life, receiue you hence the most comfortable aqua vite, stilling downe from the crosse of oure redeemer and peacemaker Christ Iesus the righteous. God hath laide vpon you some kinde of crosse,

Comforts in afflictions.

of crosse, but none such as his owne Sonne
your Sauour hath borne before you, God
hath thought good for some purpose apper-
taining to his glorie, to put you to some pai-
nes: O why should you or any of vs grudge
to take on vs the yoke of God: he hath not
spared his deare and onely Sonne, to make
him a mā, a seruant, a sacrifice for our soules
redemption, which were once solde vnder
sinne, the slaues of Satan. But were it (hap-
pie were you if it were so in deede) that you
had to pledge your sauiour where he hath be-
gun vnto you, if that you hong on the crosse
together with him, had you not then comfort
enough by you: could you not well content
your selfe to be baptized with his baptisme,
whose handmaid, I know you will not denie
your selfe to be: is it not enough for the ser-
uant to be serued as his master: were you in
the place of the penitent theefe, crauing his
pardon as he did hang together with our sa-
uiour, would you haue despaired, would you
haue mistrusted, might you be comfortlesse,
would you not reioyce:

But you will say he had his Sauour pre-
sent before his eyes. But O you of litle faith,
if you haue not as good assurāce of mercy as
he: do you not cōsider that by the iudgement
of our

Comforts in afflictions.

Warrants
out of the
Scriptures
for our cō-
fort.

of our Iudge, they are most blessed which beleue and see not: But he happie mā heard those ioyfull wordes at his redemers mouth,

To daie thou shalt bee with me in paradise. And is that sufficient: why then haue not you as sure an obligation, the warrant of his word, his testament sealed with his most precious bloud: or els are you left out of that will: Doth he not say vnto you as directly as to any other, Come vnto me and I shall refresh you: Doth he not say vnto you, Aske and haue, seeke and find, knocke and it shall be opened: are you not assured of that absolution in the daye of the Lord his appearance,

Mar. 7.29. Thy faith hath saued thee, goe thy waye in peace: are you not to be numbred among them to whom it shalbe said, Come ye blessed of my father: when that Christ saith vnto you, he that beleueth hath euerlasting life: when that he saith, I bring the water of life, I am the bread of life, I am the vine, you are the braunches: I am the good shepherd, the true Messias, the redemer of the worlde, the physition of the sicke, comming to saue that which is lost: in al these can you not picke out that promise to be with him in paradise: I dare not doubt (Sister) that you are to seeke concerning these thinges, you haue (I nothing

Comforts in afflictions,

thing mistrust) laide the foundation of your
faith on Christ the right rocke of saluation:
then can you no more doubt, then if you had
the possession of paradise alreadie, euen as it
was prepared for you from the beginning, se-
ing that he made the graunt, that hath the
whole matter in his handes, and in whome
there is no guile. Stand therfore, stand stiffe
and fall not, let not go this handfast, which if
you doe, no winde or weather may rise in the
worlde that shall any whit moue you or your
so sure building, standing on so good a ground
and so founde a rocke. S. Iohn in his first epi-
stle, setting Christ Iesus before the to whom
he writeth, This we write vnto you (saith he)
that your ioy might be full. Verely (Sister)
if we coulde fully consider Christ with his
mercie and merites, our heartes might not
but be filled vp full with ioy: for there is no-
thing so sowre, but in Christ it becommeth
sweete and sauourie, there is no want of
any earthly thing, but Christ supplieth with
a greater measure. The braunches that abide
in that vine, no weather may make them to
wither: and although they seeme for a season
much like to the naturall vine, to be as drie
and rotten stickes, such as men would scarce
gather vp in the way, yet the heavenly hus-

C. handman

Comforts in afflictions.

bandman so cherisheth and tendereth them, & in time which he knoweth to be most convenient, even then they shal shew themselves in their kinde, and freshly flourish in their fruits, when all other flowers are faded, and other trees which are not planted by him may not longer stand for their rotten roots.

Answers to certain **obiections** cōcerning the want of things. Let vs therefore stand a litle and see what more comfort we may sucke out of that fresh and fruitfull vine, so shall our hearts receiue ioye, and our ioye shalbe full. You haue no landes, nor liuinges (I thinke) in deede any thing superfluous, but yet competent. and if you were much more needie, even utterly destitute, yet you haue not to take great thought for the matter, seeing Christ telleth you, you shall haue life everlasting, paradise is your inheritance, his owne kingdome is your possession.

Cōpanie. Companie in deede is comfortable: but be it that you were berefte of the companie and comfort of your brethren and sisters, yet **1 John. 1.7** the true Christian cannot be solitary. S. Iohn saith, If we walke in the light as he walked, we haue felowship with him. And he him selfe saith, he will not leaue vs comfortlesse or solitarie, yea he wilbe present with vs vnto the worldes ende, that is, with all his, at all times

Comforts in afflictions.

times sending vs the Comforter his holy spirit. If we do that which he commaundeth vs, then he accompteth vs his friendes, his brethren, his sisters, and that which is chiefest, because it is endlesse, after we haue rine out our course, we shalbe with him in Paradise, making continually that prayer for vs vnto his Father, which he began here on earth, Father I will that they which thou hast giuen me be with me where I am, that they may beholde my glorie.

Beholde, you shall beholde the glorie of Christ: what then will you take thought for any piece of worldly estimation? All the glorie of man (saith the Prophet) is as the flower of the fielde, sone ripe, sone rotten, but the crowne of glorie, which you shall receiue by Christ, is incorruptible, once founde, neuer losse, once ripe, neuer rotten: what neede you passe vpon the wicked earthly Dammon, whereas you be most assured of that treasure laied vp for your store in heauen, euen Christ Iesus the riches of the riche, and high God of heauen?

Worldly
estimation

It would be a comfort for you peraduente Mariage, to haue an head and husband to defende you, & in whom you might delice as in your owne soule, by whom you might haue the in-

Comforts in afflictions.

crease of godly children, vnto many in deede the verpe blessing of God: but in this also you must submitte your selfe to the mightie hande of God, knowing that he worketh diuerse wayes in diuerse vessels; and those ordained to honour, for to some mariage is expedient, to some it bringeth ioy and gladnes: but contrarily in many you may see it is a snare of the worlde, a stumbling blockke, and plaine diuorcement betwixt God and them. And this inconuenience I knowe commeth not of mariage it selfe, as the proper and principal cause, which God hath ordained as holy and comfortable: but by their abuse, and for their iust plague. Whereas some sucke hony, some other meete with gall, and benymie: and yet the flower beautifull enough, and goodly in the eye. Therefore God of his high wisdom, knowing much better what is good for vs then we for our selues, doth at sundrie times cut vs short from the fruition of many his good creatures, benefites and ordinances; least by abuse we should in manner turne the nature of them to our owne hinderance and confusion, so that it may bee better for vs to lacke them then to haue the. Diuerse I thinke there be good men, and honest maydens, which peradventure would be
hard

Comforts in afflictions.

hard husbandes, and shewd wiues: neither would it be any straunge case to see, that some bare the first yoke honestly and godly, which at the second match ouerrule & weary their yoke fellows, causing them with repentance to wishe their former libertie againe. Such is the diuerse working of God, that in some he is better pleased with mariage, and other he holdeth in single life as most expedient for them.

Some againe he blesseth with the fruite of children, other he maketh baren and fruit-
Barenes.
lesse, yet both for the better, both seruing to the glorie of God, and comoditie of his chosen. Looke on the comparison made by Salomon, the 4. of the book of wisdom: he saith, that barenes is better with vertue, then to haue a multitude of children. Neither doe I write this as one that despaireth of your prosperitie this way: I know you haue had good offers, which by iudgement of man, might haue bene conuenient for you to haue followed, but I haue tolde you the worst, and yet nothing doubting but that y^e best is to come. Anna you may remember mentioned in the
Anna.
first of Sam. i. the wife of Elkanah, the happy handmaid of God, how he exercised her a long time in patience with the shame of bar-
C.iii. rennes,

Comforts in afflictions.

Tob.3. 10.

Sara.

Abraham.

rennes, as it was cosited in those dayes. But the Lorde when hee had brought her lowe enough, then he raysed her againe, heard her humble petition, and gaue her for her comfort that iuste Judge her sonne Samuel, his true seruant. In the historie of Tobias, we reade in what distresse that humble mayden Sara was, whom it pleased God to visite, and chastise her with seuen hus bandes, so that she became a reproche vnto her owne fathers maydes, laying to her charge that she had strangled her hus bandes. Thinke you (Sister) your case is comparable to this? If it be so, then take that remedie which she vled, and mistruste not of the successe that folowed, as you haue in the exāple of Anna. So she made her prayer to God the almightie, which is expresse in the historie, desiring him to pitie her case, and by some meanes to take awaye her reproche: and accordingly the Lord (as his eares are alwayes open to the prayers that proceede from an humble spirit) gaue her to wife to good Tobias, with whom she saue many a good day, and also for token of Gods blessing, issue of children. Euen so if we may hope for the best (and why shoulde you mistrust the matter, seeing that Abraham in a more desperate case, hoped against hope?)
the

Comforts in afflictions.

the Lord our God I doubt not, pitieth your case so farre, that he will sende you a trustie Tobias, to whom you may betake your selfe without feare, with whom you may leade out your life in peace and comfortable quietnes, by whom you may conceiue and beare some such sonne as is reported of Samuel, in whome you may reioyce as in an obedient sonne, and in whom God may be glorified as his seruant. But if the example of Anna, and Sara, do not so much moue you, if it be out of your hope to haue their good happe, let vs then returne againe to Christ our sweete sauiour & righteous redeemer, at whose hand, when all other aydes do faile, we may be bold to fetch comfort, and that most plentifully.

If Tobias come not, yet you may wel content your selfe with Christ, finding that in him you shalbe sped as fully as you can wish. You are of the flocke of the faithfull: then will he stande you to all purposes in stead of an husband, not after an earthly, but after an heauenly sort. Hee is the heade to defende and gouerne that bodie, whereof you are a member. Such as the husband is to the wife, such is Christ to those that are of the Christian Congregation, as S. Paul hath made comparison. It is a great comfort in deede for

An excellent comparison betwene the profite & comfort that the wife may haue of her husband, and the same we haue of our head and husband Christ

Comforts in afflictions.

Adam to haue his Eue, and contrariwise: but Christ it is, that blessed seede, that hath blessed them both. There is a narrow bond and copulation betwixt the wife & her husband, for they are reckoned one in flesh: Euen so hath Christ, to make vs vnto him an holy spouse, taken bone of our bones, and fleshe of our fleshe. Your husband would cleaue vnto you when your other friends would forsake you, and Christ will accompanie and assist you when your husband hath left you. He must sometimes of necessitie be absent from you, death shall make a grieuous diuorcement betwixt you: but no time may tye Christ from you: by him it is that you liue, & that you liue well, he shall assist you at your dying day, and at the latter day he shall rayse you againe. Your husbände peraduenture, would thinke no money, no meate, no appa-
rell to deare for you, and so doing, you would thinke him a good husband: but whether he would die for you I doubt. But Christ Ie-
sus that good shepheard hath shewed you so much loue, that he hath layd downe his life for you, he hath shed his bloud for you, he di-
ed euē the death of the crosse, he died for your sinnes, and rose againe for your iustification, and now maketh intercession for you, which
he

Comforts in afflictions.

he will continue vntill the time he hath placed you in his kingdome to reigne with him for euer.

Thus (Sister) as my simplicitie serueth me, I haue attempted that, which I feare I haue not obtained, (if it might be) to comfort you, or rather to tell you where you may seeke and finde comforte, then of my self to make you any deede of gift: For God is called the authour of al consolation, therefore I referre you to him by your prayer, and by resort vnto his worde, written for all our comfortes. I haue but somewhat assaied to playe Iohn Baptistes parte, I am not he of whom you must receiue this good gifte, but you must looke toward an other: Therefore I say vnto you of him whose shoolatchet I am not worthy to vnloose, Behold the Lambe of God who bringeth this comfort with him, a salue (me thinkes) sufficient to heale all sores, as that he is that Lambe that taketh away the sinnes of the worlde. Nature hath so prouided that if we receiue any wound in the head, the welke that is in the hande, the corne that is in the foote, we soone forget & lose the sence thereof. Consider (Sister) howe your head was wounded, then shall your handes and your feete the lesse grieue you:

Comforts in afflictions.

you: Nowe againe our head is whole, triu-
phing in heauen: why then should our hearts
be heauie on earth, as though the head had
forgotten the bodie, or any part thereof: No
(Sister) doubtte you not, he will not suffer
an heare to perishe of that bodie which he so
dearely purchased, seeing that this mightie
Michael hath subdued our archenemy, that
terrible dragon, and subtil serpent with his
petie captaines, death and hell, what should
we be so much moued with any force of the
fleshe, or any mischiefe that the worlde may
worke vs: Yea, here also your Saviour spea-
keth cōfortably vnto you, saying, Be of good
chere, I haue ouercome the worlde. Seeing
that he hath broken the head of our enemy,
what should his taile so much trouble vs: se-
ing hee hath taken away our sinnes, what
should any sorowes remaine amongst vs: &
if we sorowe not for our sinnes, why doe we
lament for any other earthly trifle: So (Si-
ster) if your eye be fully fixed on Christ your
redeemer, seing his paines and his patience,
you may not but quiet your selfe, considering
his merites and his mercie, you can nothing
mistruste but he that tooke away the greater
burthen of your sinnes, will also open you a
waye out of your sorowes, so that nowe you
haue

Comforts in afflictions.

haue no occasion left of mistrust in the goodnes of God. For he that gaue vs his Sonne, Rom. 8.32.
howe should hee not with him giue vs all things also: and now your ioye must needes be full, as S. Iohn saith. Say not then you are in miserie, for you see present remedie ha-
uing good assurance of eternall felicitie. And if a mā should aske you how you proue your state to be miserable, I am sure you can not proue so fast as I can disproue.

You will say, I am an abiect in the worlde: Comforts against the contēpt of the world, and sorow and hea- uines,
I answere, the more meeter for God, the liker you are to your Sauour: so saith the 1. Cor. 12.
Apostle to your comfort and mine, The vile things of the worlde, things despised and things of nought, hath God chosen.

I am sad and pensiue, (you will say) my meat doeth mee no good, I enioye not the worlde. But these are no arguments, hereby to conclude miseries. For euen the holy and happie Dauid had such sugar and sauce to his meate, he mingled his bread with ashes, and where was most likelyhood of rest, his bed he watered with teares, so that of your sorow it selfe you may receiue comfort, because that shorte worldly sorowes are but a passage vnto vspeakeable, incredible, and eternall ioye and consolation. Our Sauour saith they are
happie

Comforts in afflictions.

happie that lament, for they shalbe comforted, but hee setteth a woe vpon those that laugh: so that by his iudgement happines (and heauenly happines he speaketh of) cometh rather by lamenting then laughing.

Reuc. 21. Yea, God himself wil take þ paines to wipe away the teares of the eyes of such as sheade any vnder the crosse, & especially in the cause of his Christ. You haue litle comfort peraduenture in the worlde, yet I am sure more then Lazarus in his penurie, or Iob in his perplexitie: and the lesse you finde on earth, the more belike you shal haue in heauen. You knowe the answer to the riche man, in the parable, that he had his earthly pleasure for

Luk. 16. 25 his portiō. But what an exchange made Lazarus' euen eternal pleasure for temporal penurie. If you haue not your portion with the riche man here, you may the lesse doubt to haue parte and place with Lazarus in the kingdome of God. And here let Christ be your comforter: You shall lament (saith he) but the world shall reioyce, and in him, hee saith you shall haue peace. O see that pitifull and sauuing Samaritan, how he powreth wine and oyle into your woundes, euen the peace of conscience, the peace of God that passeth

Ioh. 15. 18. all vnderstanding. If the world hate you (saith he) you

Comforts in afflictions.

he) you know that it hated me before you : & if our Saviour hath lead vs the waye , what should we sticke at the matter : where as he hath ouerlept so great blockes , why should we stumble so at euery strawe which the deuill casteth in our way : The Apostle saith, 2.Tim.2. If we suffer with him, we shall raigne with him : and if we die with him , we shall liue with him. O Sister, let vs not shrinke from our Captaine, whome we see already to be a conquerour . Let vs prepare our selues patiently to abide the pleasure of God : let vs exercise patience in the lighter, that we may the better beare the greater burden . Let vs liue and die with our Saviour , let vs suffer with him in all patience, that we may reigne with him in glorie, to the which the afflictions of this world with all extremitie (as S. Paul hath cast the matter) are nothing comparable. We hope to haue our part in the kingdom of Christ Iesus, let vs not then looke for it there where he hath tolde vs it is not to be found : Let vs not seeke after worldly wealth or earthly felicitie , let vs not looke here to rule the roste, but to be rosted rather of Rulers . Our kingdom is where Christ reigneth, let that content vs , knowing that his kingdom is aboue all powers, al things being

Comforts in afflictions.

being in subiection vnder his feete.

Here I leaue you (Sister) betaking you to Christ, who couereth you as one of his chosen chickens, vnder the shadow of his comfortable winges, against whom as long as you liue, neither the world, which he hath conquered, neither death, which he hath swallowed vp, neither the gates of hel, which he hath closed vnto you, shal any thing preuaile. That which I haue said, I haue said once, & peradventure as good vn said: but Christ continually comforteth you with his sweete promises and euerlasting word of saluation: he still crieth vnto you, Be of good chere, I haue ouercome the worlde: reioyce in this (sayth he) that your name is written in the booke of life. Betake you therefore wholly to him, reioyce in his crosse, resorte to his word, whence, as out of paradise you may gather flowers sufficient to fill you with ioye. And if it hath pleased almighty God any thing to refreshe you with this my poore posy, his will be done, his name be glorified, Amen: I haue my rewarde: and he the God of all consolation graunt vs the heauenly comfort of his holy Spirit, that peace which the world can not giue, and that constant patience in all his fatherly corrections, that we be not founde false

Comforts in afflictions.

falle hirelings, but true and trustie seruants:
no bastard children, but by vnfained faith, the
blessed posteritie of the blessed Abraham,
and true regenerates of God by our
Saviour Christ. And the holie
sanctifying Spirit of trueth;
and God be blessed for
euer, Amen.

A verie godly and lear-
ned Exhortation to suffer patiently impri-
sonment, exile, or what miserie soeuer
els may happen to a man in this life for
the profession of the Gospel of
CHRIST IESVS.

If the worlde hate you, good
Brethren, and thereupon with
sundrie afflictions and griefes do
moleste and bere you, marueile
not with grudging, but prayse G D
with patience, who in this forname fashio-
neth you to the lykenesse and image of his
owne Sonne, whome the worlde hath ha-
ted from the beginning, for whose sake al-
so in no wise it can loue you, but with mosse
spitefull hate will pursue you, euen vnto the
death,

Ioh. 15.

An Exhortation

Rom. 6.

death, for that you are chosen by Christ from the worlde, to walke forth and bring out fruite, which shall continue to sanctification, whereof the end shalbe euerlasting life. For as a riche and beautifull Harlot full of amorous filth, with a painted face, wanton looks, trimme araye, fayne wordes, large promises, great giftes, & with the entisement of quiet, wealthie and pleasant life, allureth them on whom she casteth loue (yet at the end rewardeth them with pockes, piles, fighting, brawling, and most shamefull death) whom if she can by no meanes entise to folow her fancie, she hateth so deadly, that she ceaseth not, but causeth the whole rablement of her bawdie bawdes, ruffling roysterkins with bawling bragges, shamefull slaunders, subtill surmises, quarreling questions, and falsly fayned accusations, to bere, trouble and bring to destruction: So the Princesse of the worlde, that most filthie harlot wooeth Gods children, espoused vnto his sonne Christ, to breake their faith and trowth to him plighted, and to become her dearlings, setting before their eyes all the kingdomes of the worlde and the glorie thereof, promising with holowe holines, subtill suspicion, falsely fained religion, and a pockefull of such pretie persuasions, that if they

to suffer afflictions.

they will fall downe and worship as she doeth,
she will giue vnto them all these same: for
then shall they be her owne deare dearlings,
and she will loue them, as her owne: but the
end shall be most dreadfull damnation. Whom Ioh. 15.
if she cannot perswade, neither by one way or
by other vnto her loue, from Christ their best
and onely beloued spouse, she conceiueth so
great an hatred against them, that she stir-
reth all her champions with might & maine
to doe them displeasure in their goods, to
worke them hatred of their friends, to im-
payre their good name, to punish their bo-
dies, to offende their consciences, to make
their life yeksome vnto them, and moste cru-
elly without mercie to kill them, yet whose
death is most precious in Gods sight, and
hath to rewarde a most glorious resurrecti-
on. Thus the worlde hath serued our deare
and best beloued Christ before vs for our
sakes, who was giuen into the handes of this
harlot to be thus cruelly dealt withall, for to
be vnto vs a patern, which we should folow, 1. Pet. 2.
an image, after which we must be fashioned,
painted forth before our eyes in the Scrip-
tures, to teache vs to folowe his trace with
patience, and in running this race to conceiue
comfort, hoping after victorie through fayth Rom. 8.

D.

in

An Exhortation

Rom. 15.

Ioh. 16.

in him, who both gaue vs warning of the paine, and lest we should faint, to comfort vs, promised victorie, saying, In the world shall you haue affliction, but in me peace: be of good cheare, for I haue ouercommen the worlde. To fight with a puissant enemye, whose courage was neuer abated, whose strength is inuincible, and who hath bene oftentimes assailed by many, but neuer vanquished, might discomfort a weake heart, and cause it to giue ouer at the first without further resistance: But for so much as this stern madame with all her chiuallrie and force is so ouercome, and weakened to our handes, that she is not able to resist, what countenance so euer she makes, much lesse able to overcome such as doe stoutly withstand her malice and crueltie, how faint hearted & cowardly milk-soppes may we be iudged, that wil be abashed, and may not abyde the lowring countenance of a feeble, maymed, and beaten bragger, especially seeing that in striving faithfully against her and her souldiours, the losse of renowne here is the purchasing of eternall glorie, the losse of worldly goods, the gayning of heauenly riches, the losse of a miserable and short life here, the winning and very entrance into a ioyfull and euersisting

to suffer afflictions,

King life in heauen: Is the friendshippe of the worlde so deare to vs, that therefore we should not esteeme Gods fauour: Dought our goods, wife, children, friendes, landes and possessions so much to be regarded, that for to saue them we should forsake the heauenly riches and eueralting inheritance: Dought we to be so desirous to liue here, that for a short life and vnpleasant, we will purchase an eueralting and most painefull death: But the burthen of pouertie is importable, hunger, imprisonment, exile is intolerable, the bitter stormes of persecution, and the sharpe stormes of death are so insufferable, that we feare least we shoulde not be of power to abide and passe thorow them, and therefore do thinke it better to sit still then to rise & take a fall, better not to enterpryse the conflict, then in the middes for lacke of strength through faintnes to giue ouer with shame, and runne away. How delicate, fearfull, and therefore unwilling the fleshe is to suffer, common experience teacheth, al men hauing any feeling of them selues perceiue, and chiefly they, who setting all persuations of the fleshe apart, haue of full purpose and resolute determination with them selues, entered into the schoole of sufferance, beginning at Christ

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D. ii. his

An Exhortation

Math. 4.

his crosse, and so forth to learne therein onely to glorie, can by that they feelee in them selues best declare. For as the deadly foe to mankind assaulted our deare brother Iesus Christ then most hotly, after he perceiued by plaine tokens, that he was Gods Sonne, bent, by the crosse and contempt of the world to enter into glorie with y^e fire darteres of famine, pouerty, ignominy, shame, & after ward with the feare of death: on y^e other part, with plentie, riches, honour, possessions, and glorie of the whole world, knowing most perfectly y^e these perswasions should be most strong to moue & perswade the fleshe to refuse y^e crosse, weying y^e paines & the trauail with one eye, & the pleasant wealthy honour with y^e other: so he ceaseth not to assaile Christes mēbers with the self same entisements, to cause the fleshe to abhorre the crosse, and seeke after ease, but then most busilie, when he perceiuethe the heart moued by Gods Spirit to contemne these as vanities, and to seeke after true wealth, quietnes and glorie. And without al doubt the mistrust in Gods prouidēce, wherewith all fleshe is naturally infected, & feare of the great painfull bitterness, y^e hunger, imprisonment, & persecution bringeth, alwayes objected and propounded by the delicate

to suffer afflictions.

licate fleshe, doth moue the heart of man to hate, and flye by al wayes the crosse, and to inuent and pretende excuses and causes which it should be better to refuse the to enter into trouble, among which this is not the least, y the flesh, not regarding Gods working in the middes of affliction, far aboue the capacitie of mans witte, pretendeth as though it would gladly for truely sake enterprise great matter, but y it hath not power giuen, able to go thorow withal accordingly. And this excuse is pretended euen by them, y yet wil not seme to be fleshly, but spirituall, not flattering the world for feare, but fauouring the truely of loue, & so deceiue them selues, where they vterly forsake & refuse that thing they would seme most gladly to obtayne. Wherein they comit double offence: of hypocrisie, wher they would seme to be that they are not: and of incredulitie, for that they declare plainly in this saying, that they thinke either that God can not, or els that he will not confort, strengthen, and deliuer them forth of all miseries, not esteeming his promises, wherein he hath declared his will, neither marking his wonderful working for his children from time to time in their afflictions, wherein his power most manifestly appeareth, neyther yet

An Exhortation^o

considering his fatherlie care, which is more
mindfull and tender ouer his, then the mo-
ther can be ouer her onely beloued childe.
It sufficeth betwixt man and man, specially if
they be of honestie & credie, that things passe
by word and writing: we persuaade our sel-
ues, that the thing so promised & confirmed
ought and also shalbe performed. Upon this
persuasion, if the Prince promise to the sub-
iect, the noble man to the meane, the father
to the sonne, and among marchants one to
another, it is accounted so sure, that we will
make our reckoning thereof, as though we
had it in possessio: such trust we giue one vn-
to another: and shall we then doubt in Gods
promise, which hath not only past by words,
but also by writing sealed, & confirmed with
the bloud and death of his onely Sonne? Is
there any man so mindfull of his promise, or
so able to performe the same, as our heauely
Father is, of that he promiseteth to vs? It is
commonly seene among men, that leagues, co-
uenantes and bargaines can not be so wisely
made, nor so surely confirmed, but that with
wpyelic falshood and false vnfaithfulness, they
are defeated & of none effect. But God is so
faithful in performing the thing to vs, which
he promiseteth, that heauen and earth shal ra-
ther

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to suffer afflictions.

ther come to nothing, the one title of his promise shalbe vnperformed. Yea, they that mistrust or doubt of the suretie of his promise, are no lesse in doubt whether there be a God or no. For to doubt or denie his trueth and fidelitie, is to mistrust or denie him to be GOD. A Prince & noble man for his owne honour sake, a Father for his fatherlike affection to his childe, a Marchaunt for his credit sake will kepe their promise: & would not our heauenly Prince (who as he hath made all things to serue to his owne glorie, so will not giue the same to any creature) haue his honour herein aduanced and most highly regarded, that he is most sure, iuste, and true of promise? Would not our heauenly Father we should perswade our selues, that his loue towardes vs doth farre surmount the affection of a carnal father to his childe? Can any man so much esteeme his owne credite, and estimation of trustines, as he, who is faithfull trueth it selfe, regardeth so to be knowen to his creatures? It is the greatest dishonestie among men to be so vnthankfull, to suspect or mistrust him, whose friendlie fidelitie, and faithfull friendship we haue bene sure of at all times, whensoever we haue bene in distresse: much more shame is it, to suspect, mistrust, or

An Exhortation

doubt of Gods faythful assistance, whēsoeuer we shal haue need, for so much as his faithful friendship, & friendly loue is farre aboue the trustines of man, as heauē aboue y^e earth, fine golde aboue filthie drosse, & p̄cious pearles aboue dirtie dounge. Yea there is no engine, wherewith y^e deuil worketh so forcibly mans destruction, which draweth so many frō god, & doth wryng forth of Gods iustice his fearfull vengeance, as mistrust in gods promise, & incredulity: On the other part, nothing attaineth saluation, bringeth men nere to Gods p̄sence, & draweth forth of gods mercie his fauourable loue, but only fayth & constant assistance in his most sure & faithfull promises. The losse of riches, landes, & earthly possessions is a sore grief: but is not the winning of an hundred fould so much, and the obtaining of an euerlasting kingdome a good salue for this sore: If we gaine with the losse of transitorie things, heauenly treasures, with the forsaking of worldly friēds, Christ to be our deare & sure friend, and with refusing father, mother, brother, sister, wife, childrē, purchase God to be our most mercifull Father, Christ our most louing brother, & to be loued of the Sōne of God, as his deare darlings, & only beloued spouse, what haue wee lost: what greater

to suffer afflictions.

greater gain can we haue: or what more profitable exchāge can be made: This bargaine and profite hath our heauenly Father promised vnto vs by a byl of his owne hand, sealed with the bloud of his only Sōne, testified by the witnes of his Apostles, and left with vs in our owne custodie to be paid at the sight, whensoever we shall require it: whereof this is the content: Who so hath forsaken house, brother, sister, father, mother, wife, children, or landes for my Names sake, he shall receiue an hundredfold, and the inheritance of euerlasting life. Who will denie, but that hunger, colde, nakednes, extreme pouertie, & want of things partly necessarie, are an heauie burden for man to beare: but the weight hereof is lightned and made easie to thē, that with right eye, & vnfainedly, do beleue Gods promise, and cast their care on him. Cast thy care vpon the Lord, for he hath care ouer thee. Your heauenly Father knoweth þ you haue neede of all these things, meate, drinke and clothes: he ministreth these things in due time to the beastes of the earth, the fowls of the aire, the fishes in the sea, he clothech and decketh with beautifull apparell the flowers of the fielde, according to his promise: and wil he not keepe his promise vnto vs, for whose
sakes

Math. 9.

1. Pet. 5.

Math. 6.

An Exhortation

Psal. 8.

Psal. 37.

Psal. 9.

Math. 6.

sakes he hath made these creatures, and hath made vs lords ouer them: What cause haue we rather to mistrust his promise, the y^e birde that flieth forth in y^e morning vpon this natural perswasion, y^e she shal finde foode, not doubting, but he, who made her, wil not suffer her to sterue with hunger: Haue we seene such as haue put their trust in him, sterue for hunger, die of cold, perish through nakednes: It hath not bin heard of, y^e the righteous hath bin forsaken, or his seede (begge) waiting bread. For they y^e know the Name of the Lord, wil trust therein: for he forsaketh not them, that seeke after him. Seeke after y^e kingdome of God & the righteousness therof, & all these things shalbe ministred vnto you, saith Christ. If he be true that maketh this promise, why should we feare hunger, colde, or nakednes: If he be not to be trusted, why will we take on vs his Name: If we cannot denie him, but to be most iust of promise, as he is in deede, we argue our selues of to much hypocriticall incredulitie, when we saye, that we woulde gladly suffer these for his sake, sauing for feare to want necessaries in our neede, and that wee shall not be able to abyde it. And he hath promised no lesse assistance, ayde, and comfort in all kinde of persecution,

to suffer afflictions.

tion, whether it be imprisonment, banishment,
losse of life or any membre. Yea, because we
should not faint in prison, waxe feble in exile,
giue ouer through feare of y^e bitter pangis &
sharpe prickes of death, he hath promised not
only to be reuenged on our persecutors, but
also to be present wth vs, to helpe, cōfort & deli-
uer vs. Wherefore he hath willed vs in y^e day
of our troubles to cal vpon him, adding this Psal. 50.
promise, y^e he wil deliuer vs. Wherunto the
Prophet Dauid did so trust, feling y^e comfor-
table true th^{er}of at sundrie times in many
and daungerous perils, that he perswaded him
self, al feare set apart, either of one painefull
daunger or other whatsoeuer: yea, if it were
to walke in y^e valley of the shadow of death, y^e
he should not haue cause to feare, comforting
him self wth this saying, which was Gods pro-
mise made vnto vs al, For thou art with me:
Thy rod & thy staffe, euē they shal cōfort me. Psal. 23.
Is Gods staffe waxed so weake, that we dare
not leane to much now thereon, lest it should
breake? Or is he now such a chāgeling, y^e he
wil not be wth vs in our troubles according to
his promise? Will he not giue vs his staffe to
stay vs by, and reache vs his hande to holde
vs vp, as he hath bene wonte to doe? If
he be the selfe same God and no chaunge-
ling,

An Exhortation

ling, when we be put into prison, or led into captiuitie, he goeth with vs, or throwen into the sea to be drowned, he doeth not leaue vs, or cast into the raging fyre, he is with vs, to this ende, either to deliuer vs from the violent force of them vtterlie, or at the least so to comfort vs in the middes of them, that we should rather take pleasure therein, then feelee payne. Wherefore he cryeth vnto vs continually: Feare not thou litle flocke: feare not them, that can doe no more but kil the body, that is their vttermoſt: but now the Lord that made thee (O Iacob) and he that fashioned thee (O Israel) ſaith thus, Feare not, for I will defende thee, I wil call thee by thy name, thou art myne: when thou wentest in the waters, I was by thee, that the strong floudes should not plucke thee away, when thou walkest in the fier, it ſhal not burne thee, and the flame ſhal not kindle vpon thee: For I am the Lord thy God, the holy one of Israel, thy ſauour. Let the cruel Papistes rage and roare, let the obſtinate Sodomites fret and fume, let the rablement of Antichriſtes ſouldiours, the devils owne deare dearlings threaten with ſacke, ſworde, faggot and fire, yet if God be with vs, who can be againſt vs: the mightie, ſtrong, holy one of Israel

Mat. 10.

Esa. 43.

to suffer afflictions,

of Israel hath made a faithfull promise, that
he wil be with vs, defend & deliuer vs. This
promise sufficeth to a Christian to arme him Rom. 8.
against all feare of trouble, anguisthe, perse-
cution, hunger, nakednes, perill, sword and
death, for that none of al these can separate vs
from God, but we shall ouercome, and haue
the ouerhand in all these things through the
aide and comfort of him, who hath loued vs:
for he is a faithfull God, which wil not suffer
vs to be tempted aboue our strength, but shal
in the middes of temptation make a way to
come out, that we may beare it. Who now
weying these promises dare surmise that
God will not ayde, comfort, and strengthen
you in all necessities? And will you thinke
he is not able to performe the thing he wil-
leth? Is the arme of the Lorde shortened?
Shall not he who is able to raise of stones
chil dren vnto Abraham, be of power to com-
fort, relieue & defend, whom he hath already
made? If we be assured of his wil, which his
promise teacheth vs, we neede not doubt of
his power: for whatsoeuer him please, he Psal. 135.
doeth in heauen, earth, the sea, and in al deepe
places. If we beleue his promise, all things Mar. 9.
are possible, yea there is nothing, but it is ea-
sy of him to be done. As a mighty Captaine,
who

An Exhortation

Matth. 8.

who hath vnder his gouernment many souldiers & seruants, hath the so at his comāndement, & when he biddeth the go, they go, when he saith abide, they abide, & when he willet them to do this or that, they obey his word: so is paine, pleasure, grief, ease, sickness, health, life, death at the becke & cal of God, that they come & go at his appointmēt, as the faithful Centurion confesseth in the Gospel. Yea he worketh so forcibly in his children, that leane wholly vnto his promise, & he maketh to them of paine, a pleasure, of grief, an ease, of sickness health, & of death, life: as contrariwise to & vnbeleuing, pleasure, ease, health, life is a weary irksome, & painful death. When you were in prosperitie, had the true religion of Christ among you, & were so strong within your selues, as no foreine Prince could inuade and overcome you, the Lord of hosts turned al upside down in & twinkling of an eie, hath wrapt you vp in aduersity, choked your whole realme wth false superstition, & giuen you vp into the rule and gouernmēt of such leane locusts, stinging serpēts, & spiteful spāgers, as no people haue bene heretofore plagued withall. And is the Lords power not so able to deliuer his from these miseries, to restore his true religion, and vanquish these Sodomitical Babylonians,

to suffer afflictions.

nians, as it was to giue them vp, for a time to be chastened, into their subiection: Let the Idolatrous Papistes ascribe their victories, and whole felicitie vnto their Idols and God of bread: yet our hope is in the Lord, who hath made heauen and earth, who can, and wil for his owne glories sake, shewe him selfe to be the onely God of might in giuing ouerthrowe to these Idolatours with a sodaine confusion, when they thinke the selues most sure, and looke least for it. Let them now for a while fret and fume against the Lord and his Christ, shake of his yoke, and breake his bodes in sunder: Yet is the Lord in his holie temple, his abiding is in heauen, his eyes beholde these sonnes of men, and laugh them to scorne, and at the length shal talke with them in his furie, powring vpon them from heauen, snares, fyre, and brimstone, whose cup and portion shalbe burning storme and tempest. Let them persuaade them selues, and beleue darkenes to be light, trueth fallnes, blindnes sight, and life death, and bring this to passe, that mens eyes may seeme with a skinne or slime of superstitious ignorancie to bee couered and made blinde, yet can the Lord, and also will, when he seeth time, restore light, trueth, sight & life againe to the

Psal. 2.

An Exhortation

Math. 9.

to the aduancement of his owne glorie, the comfort of his Church, and vtter confusion of his enemies. Followe therefore after the Lord, cry vnto him with the two blind men, desire him of his mercy to restore your sight, mistrust not but he is able to doe it, saye with them that you so beleue, and the Lord wil make you answere and performe it in dede: after your faith be it vnto you. If you truste in the Lord and confesse him to be omnipotent, why should you feare the crueltie of Antichrist, who afflicteth Christ in his members, persecuting and punishing their soules with superstition, idolatrie and vnbeliefe, and afflicting their bodies with hunger, imprisonment, exile and painful death: Hath not God aforesaid assisted his to wade thorowe, and ouercome the paines of all these, yea in the middes of y bitter stormes to take great pleasure: And is he of lesse power to helpe vs: shall not we now by his assistance be so able to abide, and take pleasure in paines, as our brethren haue bene before vs: My brethren, be strong in the Lord, and through the power of his strength learne, to whatsoeuer estate God shal call you, therewith to be content, knowing how to be lowe, & how to exceede, euery where and in al thinges instructed

Eph. 6.

Philip. 4.

to suffer afflictions,

ted both to be full and to be hungrie, both to haue plentie, and to suffer neede, yea, to do all things through Christ, who strengtheneth you, by whom also you shall ouercome. For if you be troubled on euery side, yet shall you not be without shift: when you bee vexed with pouertie, you shall not be utterly without somewhat: wrapped in persecution, not forsaken therein: cast downe, yet perishe not: that the excellencie of the power may bee Gods, and that you may onely glorie in the Crosse of Christ. By the crosse he entred into glorie, and they that are his, must enter in the same way. The Princes had no power ouer him, further then was giuen them from aboue, neither haue they ouer you, no not to plucke of one heare of your head, for they be all numbred, and not one falleth away without the will of your heauenly Father, who worketh all things for the best to all them that loue him. And woulde we not haue all things worke to our most aduantage? In worldly things we seeke after most gaine, and wil we neglect that in heauenly things? For to winne a small summe of money, we will take vpon vs a farre iourney in danger of robbing, in perils of drowning, and let for no payne, perswading our selues that

2. Cor. 4.

Mat. 10.

Rom. 8.

E

God

An Exhortation

God wil be with vs, assist and prosper vs in all our trauayle: and shall wee refuse to traueile by land, to passe the seas, to suffer what paine soeuer thereunto belongeth, to winne the penny of euerlasting life, mistrusting that God will not be with vs, ayde and further vs in whatsoeuer painefull perill we shall come in: O blinde incredulitie, that makest easy things to seeme hard by working an vntwillingnes in the mindes of men, whome thou rulest! If men forsake their own willes, submitting them selues wholly vnto Gods will, what thing can bee to harde: But if we will followe the appetites and delicate nicenesse of our owne willes, what can be easy: Crye therefore with Christ, (deare brethren,) Not our wylles, but thy will (O heavenly Father) be done: So eschue troubles, as may stande with his good will and pleasure: When they come vpon you, embrace them willingly, suffer them patiently, wade thorowe them faithfully, for that is his good will and pleasure. Followe the example of Christe, of the Prophetes, Apostles, and holy martyrs, who were not wedded to their owne willes, but submitted them selues wholly vnto Gods will, who wrought so with them, that in pouertie they wanted not necessities,

to suffer afflictions,

cellaries, in prison among rauening Lions
they liued harmeles, in the middes of fyre
they burnt not, in the most cruell torments
they felt no payne, and trusting to the faith-
full promise and mightie ayde of their hea-
uenly Father, desired rather to be exercised
vnder the crosse, to die with Christ, then to
be at ease, and liue with the world. Abraham
with his Father Thare forsooke his native
countrey, and from thence was commaun-
ded to depart into a countrey, whereof he
neither knewe the name, where it was, nei-
ther what comodities were therein for men
to liue withall, neither yet could he abide
there any whyle: for a great dearth did op-
presse the whole land, so that he was com-
pelled to fflye into Egypt, where he was in
daunger of much displeasure, for he percei-
ued before he entred, that he must forgoe
either his wyfe, or els sustaine daunger for
keeping her. Hee was constrained often-
times to remoue his habitation not without
great losse, trauayle and perill. Iacob also
went forth of his native countrey into a
straunge place, partlie for that his father
would not that hee should be ioynd in ma-
riage, with the daughters of the Idolatours
of that countrey, partly to fflye the crueltie of

Gen. 11.

Gen. 12.

Gen. 28.

An Exhortation

Gen. 46.

3.Reg.19.

Dan.1.

wicked Esau his naturall brother, where he serued Laban fourteene yeres for his two daughters, in keeping his sheepe: a painefull kinde of labour. Afterwarde in his olde daies was constrained by the force of a great dearth to remoue into Egypt, where hys offspring was grievously molested many yeres. Ioseph was solde by his brethren to the Ismaelites, and by them vnto an Egyptian, where he sustained great paine and perill in a straunge countrey. The Prophete Ely, being persecuted by the wicked Iezabel, fled from post to pillar. The Prophete Daniel with a great number of good and godlie Israelites were caried into Babylon captiues, there to liue in captiuitie in a straunge countrey among their deadly enemies. The Apostles of Christ, and many godly men, and also women in their time forsooke all they had, and went into straunge countreies for the Gospels sake. And after their time to this our time the Ecclesiastical histories are full of examples both of men and also women, that left landes and goodes, fled their countreies, and did choose rather in an vnkoth and vnknowen land to liue in hardnes with freedom of conscience, to serue God after his wil, then to tarie at home in wealth with bondage of con-

to suffer afflictions,

conscience, and dishonour the Lord in disobeying his holy will. It is not read that any of these did murmur & grudge to leaue their houses, landes, goodes, and natie countreis, fearing the want of friendship, the hatred of straungers, the burden of pouertie, the raging of hunger, and the lack of things necessarie for mans life here, nor yet that they came into any such distresse, but that they had sufficiencie, if not of the finest sort, yet such as serued their turne, and they wel content therewith. Abraham when he perceiued it stode with the Lordes will he should departe, he wist not whither, nor what shift to make, did not debate the matter with himselfe, take counsaile of his friendes, consult with his wife, whether he should do the thing y^e most pleased God or no, but setting apart all persuasion and wisdom of flesh, bowed downe his owne will subiect vnto Gods pleasure, bent himselfe without further delaye to obey his will, that ought onely to be obeyed in all manner of creatures: and therefore in a straunge countrey, yea in the middes of his enemies, had not onely at all times sufficiencie, but also did growe vnto great aboundance of riches. Of like sort Iacob was not onely not left destitute of succour, but did come to so

An Exhortation

great aboundance, that at his returne into his countrey, hee made therewith his most mortall foe, his deare friende, and serued the Lord all his life in great wealth. Ioseph beeing a bondman in a straunge countrey, was not so moued with the feare of false and slanderous accusations, of hunger, imprisonment, and such like griefes, that hee would, to eschue these, committe vncleane things against Gods will, but cleauing to Gods prouidence, was fostered vp against the rage of hunger, the violence of imprisonment, cleansed from the fowle spottedes of slaunders, set at libertie, and at length made ruler ouer Egypt. Although his brethren meant his destruction, when they solde him to straungers, and droue him forth of his natieue countrey, yet he acknowledgeth this their fact to be the good will of G O D, who worketh all thinges to the best for them that loue him, whether it be hunger, colde, exile, imprisonment, or death it selfe, and maketh that which seemeth painefull and grievous, easie and pleasaunt. What should wee saye to the Prophets Ely and Daniel? Ely flying the fiercenes of Achab, because he should not suffer more payne of hunger, then he might well awaye with-
all,

Gen. 45.

to suffer afflictions,

all, was fedde by rauens sent vnto him 3. Reg. 17.
morning and euening, to bring him bread
and meate for that purpose, and afterwarde
by a poore wydowe of Sarephta, and last
of all by Gods Angell, when hee was in 3. Reg. 19.
a desert, flying the crueltie of Iezabel. In
like sort Daniel was fedde in the pylson by Dan. 14.
Habacuc brought by Gods Angell, where-
upon Daniel sayde: O Lord thou hast re-
membred me, thou doest not forsake them
that loue thee. A saying of hym, who had
felt the ease and reliefe, that G D D pro-
uideth for all them that vnfainedly trust in
him, worthy to be written in golden letters,
and deeply grauen into our heartes. This
is a common and pleasant persuation to the
Apostles, and al other of Chyistes Church,
who suffered for Chyistes sake, pouertie,
exile, persecution, that in the middes of po-
uertie they were most riche, when they had
nothing left them at all, then had they all
thinges, and wanted nothing. These ex-
amples shoulde moue vs to set apart all
feare of want, and to cast our care whollye
vpon the Lorde, for so much as hee is no
lesse our louing and mercifull Father, then
hee was to Abraham or any other: yea, he
hath exhibited vnto vs in deede, and wee

An Exhortation

Rom. 8.

haue seene that Abraham woulde gladly
haue beholde. God hath not spared his one-
ly Sonne, but hath giuen him for vs all vn-
to death: howe much more will he giue vn-
to vs, if we trust in him, all other neces-
sarie thinges: Is it not a necessarie thing
to haue strength and ablenes to abide pa-
tiently for his sake, not onely pouertie, losse
of goodes, imprisonment and exile, but also
power to passe thorow easily the burning
flames of fyre, hanging, drawing, stoning,
racking, deuouring with wilde beastes, broy-
ling, boyling, and such kinde of most cruell
tormentes and bitter death, as the ene-
mies to Christ, the olde tyrantes and Anti-
christ him selfe, the Pope with his clergie
now daily inuenteth and practiseth to with-
drawe and fraye men from Christ: God
hath alwayes to his tyme giuen his such
strength to ouercome and contemne these,
and whatsoeuer crueltie coulde be inuented,
yea he hath so encouraged them to take plea-
sure in the middes of most crueltie, that they
reioyced most, when they seemed to be in the
greatest payne, as it is playne in manie hi-
stories of the Church: and will not God
deale so mercifully with vs now, as with
them of olde time: Is his mercie waxed
lesse

to suffer afflictions,

lesse nowe towarde vs, or his power not so able: God is not like vnto man to chaunge his purpose, and to be euery yere of a newe minde, he is faythfull, he chaungeth not, although to the iudgement of the fleshe he seemeth to forsake the man that is cast in prison, banished his countrey, throwen into the fire, and most cruelly dealt withall, yet he is present with him, aydeth and comforteth much more strongly, then the tormentours be able to griue or discomfort, yea, turneth the bitternesse into sweetenesse, the payne into pleasure, and that, which seemeth vnto others most vntolerable, to be most sufferable. The thre Israelites were commaunded to fall downe and worshippe the golden Image, they did not dissemble the matter, but playnely saide they would not: they were threatened to be cast into the burning fornace, they feared it not, they might haue dissembled the matter for a time, following the world, but they knew **G D** could not be deceiued, nor would not be plaied withall. The ouen was made seuen times hotter, then euer before, & they cast into it, yet were they well able to abyde it, and had much more solace in the burninge fyre, then they that onely looked on. The mother with her
seuen

Dan. 3.

An Exhortation

2. Mach. 7. seven sonnes in the Machabees chose rather
 1. Mach. 2. to suffer most cruell death, which they pas-
 2. Mach. 6. sed thorow most ioyfully, then to com-
 mitte the least thing against the Lawe of
 Ecclesiast. their G D D. So likewise Mathathias
 hist. lib. 6. his sonnes, and Eleazarus. Rhais that Chri-
 cap. 4. stian woman, although not yet so fully ca-
 techized, that shee was admitted to bap-
 tisme, set on fyre with the burning heate of
 Gods Spirit, and the famous chaste wo-
 Ecclesiast. man Potamiena with her mother Marcella,
 hist. lib. 6. after they had suffered great and horrible
 cap. 5. tormentes for the truthe sake, were con-
 sumed in burning fyre. Quinta the faith-
 Eccle. hist. full woman and constant martyr of Christ,
 li. 6. cap. 41 suffered rather to haue her legges tied to-
 gether, and to bee drawen thorow the
 streetes vpon the sharpe stones, and whip-
 ped most sharpelie, then she would seeme to
 worshippe the images or idoles in the tem-
 ples. The constant olde matrone Apollo-
 nia was beaten about the face till all her
 teeth were beaten out, a great heape of
 woode set on fyre before her face, and threa-
 tened to be cast thereinto quicke, if she would
 not agree to the Idolatours, and did willin-
 gly choose to be burnt in the raging fyre.
 So likewise the historie sheweth of Ammo-
 nariou,

to suffer afflictions,

narion, Mercuria, Dionysia, and other notable women, that were so vnfearefull to suffer most sharpe death, that they woulde runne, when they heard, where the execution was in hande, and carie their young children with them (such delight had they to suffer for Christes sake) in great hast as vnto a ioyfull feast, fearing nothing els, but that the tormentours would spare them, and that they should not be thought worthe to beare witnesse to Christes death with their owne bloud. Call to your remembrance that faithfull woman and worthe martyr of Iesus Christ your owne countrie woman Anne Askew: her imprisonment moued her not, she litle weyed the cruel torture and tearing her bodie on the racke, she ioyfully went to the fyer, and was of more comfort in feeling the paine, and lesse wearie thereof, then the lookers on to beholde, or the tormentours to do execution. The historie sayeth, that Theodorus a yong man, was so grieuoussly tormented with diuers and sundrie kindes of tormentes, and at length his bodie so rent and torne, that they left him for dead: Whome Ruffinus the writer of the Ecclesiasticall storie, afterward asked whether he felt not grieuous paines, whyles he was in the tormentes,

An Exhortation

ments, to whom he answered, that he felt verie litle paine: For, said he, there stood, as he thought, a yong man by him, who alwayes wiped the sweat from him, and so much comforted his stomacke, that the time of the tormenting seemed to him much more pleasant then painefull. Who made the yong men walke in the fire and burne not? Who hardened these martyrs of men and women, that they did not shrink at paine, but ranne thorow fire, water, and most cruell torments, and not be overcome? Certainly euen he, who had promised them, that neither in fier, water, no nor yet in the shadowe of death he would be from them, but would be their buckler, defendour and shield, faithfully performing that no temptation should so assaile them, but that he would giue a ioyfull ende and deliuerance: whereunto they trusted, and so by their constant fayth ouercame, and had the victorie. For this is the victorie that ouercommeth the worlde, euen our fayth. Hea as S. Paul saith, y^e time would not serue vs, if we would rehearse how the Patriarks, prophets, Apostles & Martyrs through faith subdued kingdomes, wrought righteousness, obtained the promises, stopped y^e mouthes of Lyons, quenched y^e violence of fire, escaped y^e edge

1. Iohn. 5.

Heb. 11.

to suffer afflictions,

edge of y^e sworde, out of weaknes were made
strōg, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flighe
the armies of the aliants, y^e women receiued
their dead rayled to life againe. Other were
racked and would not be deliuered, that they
might inherit a better resurrection. Againe,
other were tried with mockings and scour-
gings, moreouer with bonds and imprison-
ments, were stoned, were hewen in sunder,
were tempted, were slaine with sworde. And
these al through fayth obtayned good report.
The holy Ghost hath caused these histories
to be kept in w^riting for vs, y^e are now in the
latter dayes, to this ende, that we should not
onely behold in them the fierie raging of the
world from the beginning against the chosen
people of God, & how stoutly they withstood
& ouercame by faythfull patience the malice
therof, but also. y^e by reading of the, we should
in our like troubles, learne like patience, re-
ceiue the same cōfort, & being thorowly tried,
cōceiue a sure hope of y^e same victorie, which
they after many & sundrie trials did winne :
whereof we shal not be disapointed, if we to y^e
ende strue lawfully. If it be to hard & aboue
your capacitie to beholde al y^e histories & exā-
ples propounded in y^e scriptures, & the Chro-
nicles of Christs church with such cōsidera-
tion,

An Exhortation

tion, that you may espie & behold in them the order of Gods working with his Church in all ages, wherby to perceiue these your grievous chaunges to be no new and vnwonted work of God: If you doe not perceiue & see in them the true & iust cause, which moueth the Lord hereunto, and thereby to learne faithful repētance: & if you doe not vnderstand in diligent perusing them, that the end and issue was alwayes ioyfull and glorious victorie & deliuerance, wherewith to comfort your selues in the middes of miseries, take into your handes the comfortable historie of King Dauid, marke his whole life from that time he was taken from his fathers sheepe to his death: beholde in him, your selues: in the people during the time of his rule, the church of England: and in the wonderfull iudgement of God in ordering his Church then, what shalbe the ende of his sharpe crosse, wherewith he doeth exercise you at this time. And to the ende you may the better see, how to wade in considering his whole life, we haue disclosed and opened for you to beholde a part thereof: wherein you shall see plainly, that the grievous afflictions of euery one of you seuerally, and of the whole Church of England together, is not fallen by chaunce of euill or good

to suffer afflictions.

good fortune, but by the mightie hande of God, whose good will it is thus to haue you tried for a while, also for what cause GOD thus worketh, and what shalbe the ende of al these dooings. After the Lorde had founde out Dauid, a man after his owne minde, and appointed him King ouer his people, who laboured worthily to deliuer and defend Gods people from their enemies the Idolatours, that dwelt nere about them, he did not graunt to him such quietnes, neither to his people, but that he was in continuall troubles, and no small daungers, during the life of Saul, and also after his death, the Idolatours, and also Sauls friends, seeking all the wayes that might be, to disturbe him forth of his kingdom. And not onely was he thus vexed with his foraine enemies, but also most grieuously of all, by those of his household, who shoulde haue bin his most deare friends, his owne natural sonne Absalom, his most priuie Counsellours, the nobilitie of his Realme, & y^e most part of his subiectes. Absalom pretending 2.Reg.15. to his father Dauid a great holines, (as the maner of the hypocrites is) desired to haue leaue to go into Hebron, there to doe sacrifice for the performance of a vowe, which he had made in the time of his being in Syria, but

An Exhortation

but his meaning was to obtaine the kingdome from his Father, and to stirre all Israel against him, which he brought to passe: Dauid was banished, and pursued vnto þ death by his owne sonne, who wrought so much vllanie against his father, that he did not forbear in the despite of him, to misuse his fathers wiues in the sight of all the people: how grieuouse and dangerous this sodaine change was to Dauid, & to the godly people, which were but a very fewe in respect of the great number of the malicious hypocrites, which folowed Absalom, it appeareth plainly in the storie, and you may easely consider. The best that was like to come of the matter, was, that whiles the kingdome of Israel was thus deuided, Gods enemies the Philistims, who had lyen long in wayte therefore, shoulde snatche vp from both the parties the kingdome of Israel, and not onely utterly banishe Gods true religion from among the Israelites, but also bring the, their countrey, and their posteritie into most miserable bondage and thraldome, and that, to Gods enemies the most vile people, and hated of all the world. Dauid in all these perillous dangers of his owne lyfe, losse of his kingdome, & utter destruction of Gods people,

to suffer afflictions,

ple, did not discourage himself, but understā-
ding all this to be the worke of Gods owne
hande, acknowledging the true cause unfa-
inedly, did perswade him self þ the Lord after
a time, when his good wil should be, woulde
giue a cōfortable end to al these stormes and
bitter pāgs. His whole behauour he himself
describeth in a Psalm, which is left in wri- Psalm. 3.
ting for vs to learne thereafter how to behaue
our selues in the like persecutions. Whē he
was fled from Ierusalem, & the priestes were
departed frō him with the Arke of þ Lords
Couenaint, he went vpon mount Oliuet 2.Reg. 15.
barefoote, wept as he went, and had his
head couered, and so did all the people that
were with him. And he made his mone vnto
the Lord, saying, O Iehoua, how are they en-
creased that trouble me: how many are they
that rise against me, howe many are there Psalm. 3.
that saye of my soule, There is no helpe for
him in his God: Selah. Wonder not though
this good King with an heauie heart, and
sorrowfull cheare doeth lament and be-
waile his dolorouse estate. Woulde it not
griue a King, when he thinketh of no such
matter, sodainly to be cast out of his Royall
seate, and brought in daunger of his lyfe,
and that by his owne naturall Sonne:

P.

An Exhortation

Can the displeasure of any enemye so much
peare the heart of a kinde father, as the un-
naturall crueltie of the sonne to seek his
death, of whom he himselfe had his life? It
griued him no small deale to perseeue such
as had bin his wise Counsaillours, whom he
much trusted, (whose duetie it had bin, with
the spending of their owne liues, to haue de-
fended the common weale brought to good
and quiet order, both in matters of policie, &
of Gods true religion,) to be the supporters
and maintainers of an hypocrite, who had
neither respect to Gods true honour, nor yet
consideration of duetie to his most honou-
rable Father, neither yet regarde to the pro-
perous weale of his native countrey. But
nothing of all these griued him so much, as
this one thing, the remembrance and true
acknowledging in himselfe, that he himselfe
was the only cause of all these evils. He cal-
led to his remembrance, that these plagues
fell vpon him sent from God, whose worke
it was, and that for his finnes, which were
the cause thereof, and this made him weepe
and mourne. For so soone as the Prophet
2.Reg.12. Nathan had warned him of his offence, he
cried, peccavi, I haue sinned; and after ward
when hee sawe this grievous and sodaine
chaunge

to suffer afflictions,

chaunge folowe, he perceiued it came partly
for his sinne by the worke of God, and there-
fore submitted him self wholly to Gods will,
saying, If I shall finde fauour in the eyes of ^{2. Reg. 15.}
the Lorde, he will bring me againe, and shew
me both his Arke and the Tabernacle there-
of: but, and the Lorde thus saue, I haue no
lust vnto thee, behold here am I, let him doe
with mee what seemeth good in his eyes.
Thus the worthy man of God acknowle-
geth his troubles to be of Gods hande, his
sinnes to be the cause, and therefore humbly
and faithfully submittech himselfe to Gods
ordering, wel content to receiue whatsoeuer
shoulde be layd vpon him. He assured himselfe
that when he himselfe were most weakest,
then God would declare his strength for
his owne glories sake, and after he were re-
duced to a faithfull repentaunce by the cor-
rection of his mercifull Father, then the rod
shoulde be cast into the fire. This considera-
tion of plagues both to priuate men particu-
larly, and also of Realmes & whole common-
wealthes is diligently to be weyed, that as
they come from God, so haue they this ende,
that they tende partly to his owne glorie, ^{1. 2. 3.}
partly to our profit, and amendement. For
although sinne is the generall cause where-
of ^{1. 2. 3.} fore

An Exhortation

foze all mankinde generally was, is, & shalbe
maledted with many and sundrie kindes of
troubles and calamities, yet the calamities &
afflictions are not to all kinde of mentallike,
nor yet for one end and purpose. For the wic-
ked and reprobate are punished & whipped of
God to a farre other end and meaning, then
the godly and chosen children, who are y^e true
church of God, the liuely members of Christ, &
such as shalbe neuer separated fro God and
his louing fauour in Christ Iesu. These al-
though they be neuer without trouble in this
world, but alwayes exercised under y^e crosse,
yet the cause and consideration why God will
haue them thus exercised, is, either for the
glorie and honour of his owne Name, or the
profite, commoditie, and exceeding benefit of
them whom he thus afflicteth, either els for
both these considerations together, for that
there is no trouble that cometh to Christes
church or any member thereof, which appeareth
not plainly to redound to Gods glorie, & the
profit of y^e afflicted, if it be wel & iustly cōside-
red. These two causes & considerations both
the Scripture teach in all calamities of the
church, whether they be generall or particu-
lar, which being wel marked, will easily put
out of y^e way this stumbling block, wherat ma-
ny stum-

to suffer afflictions,

no stumblē & fal, marueyling wherfore God
wil suffer his word, & his cholen childrē thus
to be used & euil dealt withall. The childrē of
Israel were in Egypt most cruelly dealt w-
al 400. peeres, oppressed with most painfull
labours, most seruile exactions, their infants
slaine, they cried vnto y Lord, their griefs en-
creased, for God had hardened Pharaos
heart, that he shoulde not ease or deliuer his
people. Wherefore did God thus afflict his
people, and stirred this cruell tyrant so grie-
uouly to bere the: cruelly for his own glorie,
& their profit. God rehearseth this cause and
cōsideratiō in y scripture, of the hard & cruel
hearts of y Egyptians towards his people,
The Egyptians shal know y I am the Lord, Exod. 7.
and that I will deliuer my people by strong
hand frō among the. For this purpose (saith Exod. 9.
God to Pharaos) haue I raysed thee vp, that
in thee I may declare my power thorowout
the whole worlde. This profit they receiued,
the exercise of their faich, the triall of their
patience, and the confirming of their hope
for deliuerance, which was not deceyued.
Thus S. Paul noteth and collecteth of this Rom. 9.
hystorie, the one end to be Gods glorie, for
the honouitable fame and renowne of his
Name throughout the whole worlde, and also

An Exhortation

Hebr. 11.

2. Cor. 4.

the profit that the afflicted receive, which is the exercise of faith, as he noteth of Moles and his parents to the Hebrewes. But much more plainly doth S. Paul note & teach these two considerations to the Corinthians, saying, But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that y power which excelleth, might be of God, and not of vs. We are troubled on every side, yet are we not without hope: we are in pouertie, but not utterly without somewhat: we are persecuted, but we are not forsaken: we are oppressed, yet the lesse we perishe not. But seeing we haue the same Spirit of faith (according as it is written, beleeued, and therefore haue I spoken) we also beleeue, and therefore we speake. For we knowe that he which raised vp the Lord Iesus, shall raise vs vp also by the meanes of Iesus. Therefore we are not wearie, but though our outwarde man be corrupt, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our trouble, which is but temporall and light, worketh an exceeding and an eternall weight of glorie vnto vs. What can Saint Paul speake more to the commendation of Gods prayse and glorie, then that the excellencie of his mightie power is declared and aduanced in this, that his are troubled, unpoueri-

to suffer afflictions.

povertised, persecuted, oppressed, and yet in
all these doe not perishe nor faint, but ouer-
come by him, who hath willed his in all their
troubles to call vpon him, and he will so de-
liuer them, that his Name shall thereby be
glorified, and honoured: And what greater
profit can come to the Church, then to haue
the faith of Gods children so exercised, that
the inward man may be renewed day by day,
and that as Christ entred into his glorie by
troubles, the crosse, and death, so also our
troubles, which are but short and light in re-
spect of his, may worke into vs an exceeding
and eternall weight of glorie. Both these
two things S. Paul noteth in the generall af-
flictions of Christes Church, and also the
Scripture teacheth the selfe same generall
causes of the troubles of euery priuate mem-
ber of Christ. As our Saviour Christ re-
noteth of the infirmities of the borne blind man,
which was for this cause, saith he, that the
workes of God should be shewed on him. Iohn.9.
And in like case when Christ heard tell that
Lazarus was sicke, he saide, This sickness is
not to death, but for the praise of God, y^e the
Sonne of God might be praised therethrough.
This did much set forth y^e glorie of God in
Christ, that he was of power to rayse vp fro
death

An Exhortation

death a man, which had bin in his graue buried 4. daies, & was so corrupted & he did stink. And wherein doth & power of God more exceedingly appeare to his glory, the in raising his church & faithfull people frō the graue & pit of troubles, afflictions, and many intolerable miseries, wherein the worlde goeth about to treade them downe, & burie them: Doth not Christ herein most marueilously set forth his glorie, & when the world by motion of & deuil doth furiously fret & rage against his faithfull to roote out his word, then it springeth & flourisheth most plentifully, & the faithfull are fastened & confirmed therein most vnfainedly & boldly: This hath God wrought in al ages in & fier of troubles & afflictions, tryng his faithfull childrē for his own honours sake & their profit, as appeareth in & histories of & church frō the beginning. And beside this & our faith is thus tried, our patience proued, our hope confirmed by these afflictions, & faithfull do receiue also diuers other comodities & profitcs by troubles which are more necessarie to the then either meate, or drinke: The worldly ones set more by their easy life here to serue their idle bellies, the by the necessarie & profitable things to eternal life. By troubles and afflictions the faithfull are made of like and
sem.

to suffer afflictions.

semblable shape to the Image of Gods own
Sonne Iesus Christ, saith S. Paul, If they suf- Rom. 8.
fer with Christ, they shall liue w him in glo-
rie. Whom the Lord loueth, him he chaste-
neth, yea & he scourgeth euery sonne, whom Heb. 12.
he receiueth, & nourereth vs to that, which
is profitable, & we might receiue of his holi-
nes. And to y^e Corinthians S. Paul saith, that
when we are afflicted, we are chastened of the
Lord, that we should not be damned with the
world. Thus the scriptures do reach plainly &
also aboundantly, that for these two conside-
rations, God doeth suffer his church to be af-
flicted, and his owne people in this world to
be exercised vnder the crosse: which appea-
reth in all ages by the examples of all histo-
ries. For behold the face of Gods church fro
that good King Dauid vnto this our time, &
you shal see what wonderful chastiges & grie-
uous ouerthrowes his people haue suffered al-
waies, & therefore shoulde not maruel of this
our chaunge in England. After Dauid was
anoynted King ouer Gods people, y^e 2. booke
of Samuel declareth with what troubles God
did exercise him, & his whole kingdome du-
ring his time. But he obserued the ordina-
ces of the Lord, and kept the true religion a-
mong his people according to the comman-
dement

An Exhortation

dement of God. After him Salomō hath go-
uernance of Gods people; who in the begin-
ning of his reigne walked after his Father
3. Reg. 11. David, did build Gods temple, and observed
the true religion, but y^e lasted but a while: for
in his latter yeres he fell to idolatrie and the
service of false gods; so that the true service
of God began chē to be corrupted. After him
his sonne Roboam reigned, at whose begin-
ning y^e realme had such a miserable change,
that it could neuer after recover it self again:
for the kingdome was deuided, and 10. tribes
which were called after ward Israel, fell from
Roboam, & from the true religion vnto ido-
latrie, & false seruing of God, & so continued
in false superstitious religion, alwayes hating
the true service of God, killing the Prophets
that did teach the trueth, & the godly people
that confessed the same many yeres: and yet
at that time perswaded them selues that they
had the true service of God; and that their
doings did much please God: yea the face of
Gods Church was so blemished and brought
to such a small number of true professors, that
the Prophet Ely complaineth, that there was
not one left, but he himselfe alone, whose life
also they sought after. Consider well this
hystorie, and the working of God with his
Church

to suffer afflictions.

Church & true religion. The Prophet Samuel had taught the people the true seruice of God: the worthy king David maintained the same all his time; but with great difficultie. Salomon his sonne a Prince of most wisdom and knowledge, perfectly instructed in the wayes of the Lorde, fell from God, and corrupted Gods religion with the false seruices invented by man, so that the Lord was so offended therewith, that he cutte of from the rule of his posteritie y^e most part of the kingdom: for the tenne tribes were neuer after him vnder the gouernance of his succession, neither did afterwarde walke in the feare of God, but in Idolatrie and false religion; till at the last God sent the Assyrians to invade them in that wise, that they ouercame them, carried them forth of their owne countrey, dispersed them in many countreys among the heathen, sent strangers to inhabite their land, and so utterly destroyed that kingdom. God defende the realme of England from the like punishment. This was a fearfull iudgement of God, where hee had but one small kingdom in the whole worlde, that bare the face of his Church, where his true honour was maintained, and that so suddenly of twelue tribes ten should fall from God to idolatrie,

An Exhortation

idolatrie, and false religion: yea and the other also, during all the time of Roboam, and his sonne Abia after him, so y during al this time there was not in the worlde any Church or people, where the sincere religion and pure word of God was receiued by publike authoritie and common order: although God reserved alwayes some that privately served him and feared his Name faithfully, who were alwayes so hated and punished by the Idolaters, that their lives were bitter vnto them. In those daies did y idolaters make the selfe same reasons & arguments against the Prophets and their doctrine, which your Idolaters doe make now against Gods people & his true religion. The faithfull then liued among those Idolaters with no lesse feare, trouble and persecution, then the Christians doe now in England. The Prophets were then imprisoned, & driven out of their countrey like seditious heretiks, the causers of all euill, as the true preachers now in England are partly imprisoned, partly driven out of the realme. After the death of these wicked Kinges of Iehuda, God visited his people with some light of the trueth by the meanes of Aza, and King Iosaphat after him: who restored, although not perfectly,

ly,

to suffer afflictions.

In the true religion, bannished the false, and destroyed the Altars of the Idolaters. The which reformation was not done with- 3. Reg. 22. out great difficultie and trouble, and continued but a small time in that same order. For Ioram the sonne of Kinge Iosaphat overthrowe the true seruice of **G D D**, condemned it, and brought in the place there of the superstitions, and Idolatries of the Kinges of Israel, and so the Church continued neuer perfectly reformed, but alwayes afflicted, till the time of Ezechias. For although Aza, Iosaphat, Ioaz, Amazias, Vzias, and Ioatham, attempted a reformation, and were indifferently good Kinges, yet was not the Church cleansed of all the Idolatries, and false counterfeite religion, as it appeareth by the Prophets, Ely, Amos, Esay, Ozea, Michah. But the worthy King Ezechias in the first yere of his raigne began to reforme the religion, brake downe and bannished all Idols and Images, hit altars, and whatsoeuer was against Gods commaundement, restoring Gods true religion after the rule of Gods worde. The which thing as he brought to passe not without great troubles and difficulties, so it continued in puritie but a litle time. For his Sonne, wicked Manasses,

An Exhortation

Manasses, who raigned after him, put away, and did forsake the true way, and brought in againe all maner of Idolatrie and false religion, and did grievously punishe and persecute the faithfull people, and true Prophets. He shed (saith the Scripture) innocent blood exceeding abundantly. In lyke maner did

4. Reg. 21. his sonne Amthon also, who raigned after him. This grievous change remained thus, until the good King Iosias made a newe and godly reformation: which ought to bee a glasse to all Princes to beholde themselves

4. Reg. 22. in. But this godly reformation of this good King did not continue: for his sonne, and all the Kings of Iehuda after him forsooke the wayes of God, and restored againe the Idolatrie, and false religion of their forefathers, and so continued, till God sent the King of Babylon to destroye their citie, Temple, and countrey. Who also led them captiue into Babylon, where they continued many yeres in great affliction, as it appeareth by the Prophets, Ieremie & Daniel, so that in fine hundredeth yeres and aboue, in the dayes of all the Kings of Iehuda Gods religion was set forth, and receiued in publike order sincerely and perfectly, and the contrarie utterly banished & abolished, but only in the tyme of Dauid,

to suffer afflictions.

uid Ezechias and Iosias; as Iesus the sonne of
Sirach witnesseth, saying, all Kings except
Dauid, Ezechias and Iosias committed wic-
kednes: for euen the Kings of Iehuda also
forgot the lawes of God. With what diffi-
culty and troubles, Gods religion and true
seruice was restored after y^e returne of Gods
people from Babylon, and how short a time
it continued in puritie, what troubles and
griuous persecutions the true seruants of
the Lord suffered, it is partly set forth in Es-
dras, and Nehemiah: after in Hester, & then
in the Machabees: And although vnto the
comming of Christ, there was an outwarde
face and beautifull shew of Gods religion a-
mong the Iewes; yet was it so defaced, and
utterly falsified with traditions of the Pha-
rises, who were that time in estimation,
that Christ himselfe doth testifie, that their
seruice was but vaine traditions of men, Mat. 15.
and the commaundement of God was not
observed. All that time there were no Pro-
phets to instruct them in the right waye.
For immediatly after the captiuitie, all pro-
phesying ceased in Israel. Nowe peruse the
historie of our Saviour Christ in the foure
Euangelistes, and you shall perceiue in what
state Christ founde his true religion, what
paines

An Exhortation

Act. 8.

paines and trauaile he tooke to restore the true and sincere honouringe of God, with howe great difficultie hee brought it to passe, and at the last, howe it cost hym his life. After whose death the crueltie of them, who would seeme to haue and maintaine the true honouring of G O D, ceased not, but stirred most vehement persecution against the true Church of Christ, and dispersed it thorowout all the worlde: with what paines, troubles, and difficultie true Christianitie was planted, and false religion put away, S. Lucas partly mentioneth in the Actes of the Apostles, who spent their liues in the buylding of Christ his Church. After Christ his death the cruell tyrant Nero the Emperour did persecute the Church most cruelly, after whose time, the Church was in some quiet, but not long: for Domitian the Emperour did persecute Christ his Church to destroye his true religion most hainously. Nerua his successour was friendly to the Christians. Traiane after him a cruell persecutour, and ennemie: and then Hadriane: after whose tyme the Church had rest for a whyle. For shortly after, the Christians that were in Asia, and also in the West parties, were cruelly disquieted. Shortly after
this

to suffer afflictions.

this tyme did England receyue the Christiā
fayth, and was the fyrst countrey of all the
world that receiued the faith of Christ by pu-
blique authoritie (Lucius beeing their first
Christian King,) but the puritie of Christ his
trueth, did not long there cōtinue, not much
aboue an hundredth yeres. Seuerus the Em-
perour wrought all the meanes that might
be, to destroy Christes Church, and to sub-
uerthe the true religion with most sharpe per-
secution, after whose time there was some
quiet; but shortly after the cruel tyrant Maxi-
minus did soze molest the faithfull, and like-
wise after him Detius, Gallus, Hostilianus,
Lucius Valerianus. Galienus graunted the
Christians peace, Aurelianus did persecute
them. And Dioclesianus more like an infer-
nall serpent, then an earthly man, did as it
were deuoure the Church most cruelly. In
this time was the greatest persecution, that
had bene before: The tormentours were
much more wearie in sheading the Christian
bloud, and cruelly tormenting the faithfull,
then the holy martyrs were in suffering the
paines. There were in this persecutiō with-
in thirtie daies aboue seventeene thousand
Christians killed most spitefully. But Con-
stantine the good Emperour became a Chri-
stian,

Eusebius
eccle. hist.
li. 8. cap. 9.

An Exhortation

stian, set the Church in peace, & was the first
Emperour that did by publike authoritie put
downe gentilitie, and truely mainteined the
Christianitie. But that lasted not long: for
within short time after, Iulianus the apostata
being Emperour, went about to vndo al that
Constantine had done, vsed wonderfull poli-
cies to destroy the Christian religion, and did
afflict the faithfull verie grievously. After
this time the Church was grievously mole-
sted by the Arrians, after with Hunnes, Van-
dals, and Gothes, and so continued many
peres till all good learning began wonder-
fully to be decayed, and at the length albeit
the Church seemed to be at rest, yet hath it
bene euen to this daye miserably afflicted,
and the pure religion vtterly defaced, by two
vicars the Deuil put in commission at one
time about eight hundred peres since: the
Antichrist of Rome for the West, and Ma-
homet for the East. Nowe weye and con-
sider with your selues this same brieve re-
herfall of the state of Gods Church, howe
the Church of the Israelites was afflicted
in Egypt, then in the time of the Iudges,
next vnder the Kinges, at the last caried into
a straunge countrey captiues, after their re-
turne and reedifying of the Temple what
great

to suffer afflictions,

great perils and troubles it sustained till after the daies of the Machabees, next consider the historie of Christ, & the Actes of the Apostles. After this the ten notable persecutions the Church suffered vnder most cruell tyrantes from the eight yere of Nero, by the space of thre hundredeth and twenty yeres, vnto the time of Constantine, and from his time thre hundredeth yeres after by the Arrians, and barbarous Hunnes, Vandals and Gothes, by whose meanes good learning was decayed, and ignorancie brought in: And then marke with aduiselement, how that from that time hitherto Mahomet hath vsurped and afflicted the East Church, and the Pope the west (for he began to exercise his proude power ouer the Churche about the same time, that Mahomet brought in his religion) consider I saye with aduiselement in all these times, howe litle whyle Gods religion was maintained in the Churche, what perillous chaunges were in the kingdomes, what exceeding crueltie was alwayes vsed against the people of God, as though they had bene heretikes, his word condemned as heresie, and the cause of all euils: and you shall perceiue that this is no newe or vnkoth thing, that the true religion of God should be thus

An Exhortation

put away and condemned, and the faithfull Church molested and afflicted both generally as is plaine in these histories, and also particularly in the ministers & faithfull members, as appeareth in Abel, the Patriarches, Prophets, Christ, his Apostles, & in a great number of holy sainctes and martyrs, since the death of Christ til now our daies. Thus may you plainly see how God hath wrought with his Church at all times, and therefore should not discourage your selues, because of this sodain chaunge, but with David acknowledging your sinnes to God, declare vnto him how many they be, that beere you, and rise against you, naming you heretikes and the children of Belial, as they named David. Let the wicked Idolaters boast and bragge that they haue ouercome you, and that God hath giuen you ouer & wil no more be your God: let them put their trust in Absalom with his long golden lockes, and in the wisdom of Achitophel the wise counsaillour, yet say you with David, thou O Lord art my defender, thou art my worship, and the lifter vp of my head, feare not their violence to hurt you in your bodies, to harne you in your goodes. Perswade your selues with David that the Lord is your defender, who hath compassed you round

to suffer afflictions.

round about, and is as it were a shield, that doeth couer you on euery part: it is he only that may and will compasse you about with glorie and honour, it is hee, that will thrust downe those proud hypocrites from their seat, and exalt his lowly and meeke. David in the mids of his miseries did thus comfort him selfe, leaning to the prouidence of God, looking for deliuerance from him, appointing God no time, but committing the whole matter vnto his wisdom and goodnesse. He layed him selfe to sleepe, rose againe, was not afrayed for innumerable people, that set him round about to haue destroyed him, for the Lord wil sustaine me, saith this good King. This was his shot anker, here was his refuge, herewith he comforted him selfe, that the Lord would bee his defender and bulwarge, and at the length restore him to his place againe. He armed himselfe with the armour of God, but aboue all he tooke to him the shield of faith, wherewith he quenched the fyrie dartes of the wicked. Hee had the helmet of saluation, the sword of the spirit, the promises of God, and buckled these fast vnto him selfe with this long and durable girdle of faithfull prayer and watching, saying, I wil crye vnto the Lord with my voyce,

Ephe. 6.

An Exhortation

and he will heare me from his holy hill. If you will receiue comfort, crye with David vnto the Lord, exercise your faith in earnest and continual prayer, say, arise O Lord & help me, and he will smite your enemies on the cheekbone, and brast all their teeth in sunder, he will hang vp Absalom by his owne long heare. Achitophel through desperation shall hange him selfe, the bandes shalbe broken, & you deliuered: for this belongeth to y^e Lord to saue his frō their enemies, & to blesse his people. Thus David in the mids of his affliction did comfort him selfe, trust to the only prouidence of his most mercifull God, perswading him selfe both of his good will, and mightie power, whereby he should haue deliuerance, and was not deceiued. This blessing shall also be on you, if that neglecting the wisdom of the worlde, you submit your selues to the correctiō of God your heauenly Father, faithfully crying him mercie, & patiently abiding his good will and pleasure.

FINIS.

